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THE
CONVENT
OF
NOTRE DAME:
OR,
JEANNETTE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
A TALE OF MYSTERY, OR CELINA.

VOL. II.

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JEANNETTE.

CHAPTER XIX.

An unexampled Refusal.

I Yesterday left off, Jeannette, just as the old commander of Mellery with his nephew Saint Ange entered the apartment of M. de Servol, his old friend and our's, at Calais. While my father, with great satisfaction, renewed his acquaintance with the old gentleman, Saint Ange perceived me, flew to me with eagerness, and testified his regret at having been so cruelly deceived with regard to me.—What mean you

fir?—Ah, Mademoiselle Saint Brice !
 what a wicked woman was that Madame
 de Linval ! and with what monsters of
 iniquity has my credulous youth associ-
 ated ! what eternal remorse must I feel !
 what indelible shame must be my por-
 tion !—It is true, fir, the society of
 those depraved beings was not fitted for
 you ; and it is no doubt from the recol-
 lection of the time you devoted to such
 society, your dissatisfaction springs.—
 Mademoiselle !...you can never conceive
 the errors I have been guilty of : I
 should become too odious in your
 sight.—Sir, the manners of your sex
 are, I am told, much less rigid than
 those of our's. A vicious connexion,
 which is broken when recollected as
 such, does not excite eternal remorse,
 and is even entitled to indulgence.—
 Oh ! how that word raises my spirits,
 and how much I need it ! it is too true,

Mademoiselle, I have lost all right to any other sentiment.

His uncle, who now called him, prevented me from questioning him on this excessive compunction, the cause of which I could by no means guess. Is this, Saint Ange, your eagerness to pay your respects to M. de Servol, the best friend you have in the world, said the commander to him in a tone of raillery, which did not escape my notice? Pardon me, my uncle, but I felt such satisfaction on finding here Mademoiselle Saint Brice !...I sincerely believe you....There is my nephew, my dear Servol, you find him tall and handsome, and he has some claims to your attachment, for you was present at his birth.—Alas ! yes, replied M. de Servol with a sigh; I shall never forget that fatal moment....—Peace! Peace! interrupted the commander; let an eter-

nal night enshroud for ever such misfortunes !....We have come without ceremony to ask of you an asylum for a few months! for I expect here news of the vessels I have sent down the coast, and which have not arrived: it is now my only resource; for, as to my commandery, they are making such changes in every department, that I very much fear it will go to the devil, like all the religious orders.

Here the conversation became general, and I felt the most lively pleasure in learning that Saint Ange would pass some time with us. Yet a grievous reflection presently embittered this satisfaction, and gave my heart a severe pang. In three months time I should become a mother! What embarrassment, what shame did I feel at the idea of becoming contemptible in the sight of a man whose love and esteem were so necessary to my happiness.

I revealed these harrassing reflections to Madame de Servol, who was entirely in my confidence, and she was alarmed as well as myself. Yet she flattered herself she could be of eminent service to me at that period, and gave me hopes of concealing it from every eye.

The arrival of the commander spread a delightful charm through our whole family. Servol, his friend, and my father, still concealed under the name of Saint Brice, which he had privately requested Servol to keep secret, these three were inseparable companions, while Saint Ange and myself formed Madame de Servol's society, who knowing our affection for each other, assisted us in disclosing it in her presence. Full confessions followed partial confidence, and we were soon, my lover and me, on the best understanding. Yet he still spoke of his errors, his remorse, and the

horror Madame de Linval's conduct inspired. I pressed him one day to give me an explanation of these obscure hints ; and he obeyed me, but still concealing his crime towards me. He informed me, that the artful Madame de Linval, still believing M. de Saint Brice was Dormon, a mistake which he explained to me, as I have related to you, my dear Jeannette, that this wicked woman had made me pass in the opinion of her vile society for the fictitious Dormon's mistress. I believe it like the rest, added he with timidity. Pardon me, Mademoiselle, for having offended your virtue so far as to fancy you one of those who live on the produce of dishonour ! Culpable error ! Your modesty, your virtuous manners, all ought to have erased such an idea from my bosom. But my youth, bad council, the state of almost constant in

toxication to which we were habituated in this house of debauchery, all bore me away....all formed a fatal illusion in my sight. Yet were we, some time after your departure, all undeceived with regard to you; and it was Madame Dumerel herself, to whom we were indebted for the information. This intriguing woman, who, to avenge herself on Madame de Linval, had palmed on her the fiction of love and an approaching visit of a Monsieur Dormon, incognito, learned that her rival had fallen into the snare she had laid for her; she instantly sat about revealing by letter to Madame de Linval the jest she had played on her, informing her that the person she had taken for Dormon was a gentleman of respectable family travelling with his daughter. Madame Dumerel sent circular letters to all her acquaintance,

giving a relation of this curious adventure; and thus the vanity, as well as the ambition and avarice of Madame de Linval became the conversation and laugh of the whole province. You may judge of Madame de Linval's fury, the surprise of her companions, and my grief....My uncle was soon acquainted with this curious affair, it opened his eyes as to his hostess's degeneracy; he presently made his bows to her, and we left her for ever. Since that time we have visited some friends, and have at last halted here, where it has been my good fortune once more to meet with you.

I was irritated, as well as Madame de Servol, at de Linval's conduct; and we should have been still more so, if we had known the insults to which she had exposed my innocence. Saint Ange was silent on this point, and indeed he

felt too great compunction for his crime, to dare to reveal it.

When my father was informed by the commander of this mistake of Madame de Linval's, he laughed heartily at it, little suspecting, alas! what a cruel revenge this abandoned woman had exercised on his daughter. This vengeance, which Saint Ange alone knew, was soon destined to be accomplished, and to deliver me to eternal regret and sorrow.

Yet the passion of Saint Ange seemed daily to increase, and mine corresponded to the excess of its emotion. Madame de Servol, the constant partner of our conversation, acted the part of a generous friend, and only feared the discovery of what she called my imprudent error to my lover. One day Saint Ange hazarded the mention of marriage; he threw himself at my feet

imploring me to consent to our union, which he would instantly go and demand of my father. I was on the point of encouraging him in this step; but Madame de Servol, with an expressive look, restored me to prudence, in recalling my unhappy situation. Ah, sir! said I to him, covering my face with my hands, that union, so much desired by me once, can no longer be mine. Do not question me further, and cease to hope!...

Having uttered these words, I precipitately quitted the room, leaving Saint Ange, still on his knees, no doubt much surprised at my refusal and sudden departure. Saint Ange, struck as by a thunderbolt, questioned Madame de Servol, who told him an invincible obstacle opposed our union.—And what is it, great God! is there one I cannot surmount?—It is, sir, terrible, insur-

mountable !...at least for the present.—
 For the present! that is to say a time
 will come....—When, sir, you shall
 know all; and then, if you persist in
 your marriage project, you will have no
 one to reproach but yourself !.....—To
 reproach !...Deign to explain yourself.—
 I cannot ; it is my friend's secret, and
 not mine.—Secret !....

Madame de Servol now arose, and repaired to my apartment ; she found me in tears, and endeavoured to console me. My friend, said she to me, it is not a time to add to your remorse ; but if Saint Ange has been the cause of your indiscretion, conceive your good fortune in his now being willing to marry you ! of veiling under his name your dishonour !—Ah, madame, have I not said I know not who has injured my virtue !—Still that uncertainty, my friend ? you know I cannot give credit

some alterations and embellishments made there by the return of spring. She found no difficulty in obtaining my father's consent to take me with her; and she took care to arrange this journey so well, that the men remained at Calais, while my friend and I departed to spend a month at Rémival, where was situated her country house. There, we daily awaited the period when I should become a mother; and our only apprehensions proceeded from the idea of a visit, not from M. de Servol, who had too many engagements at Calais to permit it, but from the old commander, who was very fond of *surprises*; or his nephew, whose impatient affection might ill brook my absence. However, my friend, by means of a few trusty and faithful servants, was apprised of all the motions of our interrupters; and, on the first intelligence of their coming

we should have quitted Rémival for some other retreat.

Happily no one came to disturb our solitude; and, three weeks after my departure from Calais, I brought into the world a fine little boy.

CHAPTER XX.

The Father's Joy, and fatal Consequences.

IT was about the ninth hour of the morning when I was safely delivered. A faithful nurse, a midwife, and Madame de Servol were standing near my bedside; and, for the last two days the near approaches of my lying-in had so entirely engaged our attention, that my friend had not been able to attend to her usual precautions. I was then a mother, Jeannette, and was holding in my arms, while I covered it with kisses, that infant, which gave me the first idea of his sex, and whom I called my son, my beloved son!—

The door opened, and we beheld,

great God! Saint Ange himself enter; and struck with astonishment at the scene before him, he suddenly paused. What do I see? exclaimed he.—I fell back on my bed, deprived of all sensation!

Madame de Servol, enraged at the young man's intrusion, and vexed at her own thoughtlessness, which had just made him acquainted with my error, severely reproached him for his rude visit: Saint Ange, still absorbed in astonishment, did not make her any reply. My friend flew to my assistance; she tried every means to restore me, and at length I beheld once more the light of day, only to detest it. Judge of my sensations, Jeannette, my grief, my confusion.—The intruder was now leaving the apartment; I exclaimed: Saint Ange, Saint Ange, Oh! stay, I beseech you; do not load me with con-

tempt; do not accuse me without hearing me!—This child, it is true, is mine! but I am innocent! I am indeed.—I know not how—O God! thou only canst justify me!—This is then the obstacle you once alluded to, Mademoiselle? replied Saint Ange, pale and hesitating. This is the impenetrable mystery! Ah! perfidious woman! I could have fancied thee virtue impersonated on earth!—And such she is, sir, replied my friend; with me she has no secrets; and, what surprises me, is that she has solemnly sworn to me she was never acquainted with man. She has ever spoken on this subject with an ingenuousness which insincerity could not assume.—But what an injury are you doing her at such a moment as this! Behold her tears, hear her deep sighs.—

I here exclaimed: He believes me guilty!—I have always thought, con-

tinued Madame Servol, that some villain, taking advantage of her sleep.—Her sleep! what mean you, replied Saint Ange, apparently struck with confusion and surprise. Ah, Madame, deign to explain yourself. How long has she been pregnant?—Nine months, sir.—Nine months! it is just that time. Yes, yes, she is most virtuous; I am the guilty being.... Oh, my wife! oh, my child!

Saint Ange threw himself on my bed; he seized the child, embraced it with the most ardent affection; then, falling on his knees, he sought my hand to hide that countenance, on which was now impressed remorse and embarrassment. Madame de Servol, the attendants, and myself remained mute with astonishment at the exclamations of the youth, and no one could guess what he meant: at length he explained himself

You look on me in silence, said he, and cannot believe that I am that villain, that suborner!—Saint Brice, Saint Brice! do you remember that night, the last you spent under Madame de Linval's roof? you slept in her apartment. To revenge herself, this infamous woman had stupified your senses with a soporific drug she infused in your drink: frantic with love, and other passions which I dare not recall, I found the door of your chamber open: you slept the sleep of angels—and—I dared to dishonour you.

Instead of loading Saint Ange with reproaches, a soft repose seemed to steal over my soul; my peace of mind was restored, and I exclaimed: how, my beloved friend, tell me was I insincere? am I still culpable in your sight.

Madame de Servol could hardly recover from her surprise. What! young

man, said she to Saint Ange, is it you who have thus deeply outraged honour and virtue! this dear girl was then innocent, when she assured me that she was ignorant. But let us think no more of it; all is atoned for. Saint Ange, behold your wife and child. Cheer up, my friend; open your arms to Saint Ange; you have recovered all your rights to his esteem.—Oh! when shall I ever regain her's! replied Saint Ange. I, who have been educated in principles of virtue and propriety! thus to degrade myself! Oh! into what a torrent has vice led me! Madame, endeavour to obtain my pardon.

Saint Ange, replied I in a weak voice, you have associated me with the most abandoned wretches; you have been the instrument of a monster's cruelty whom I never injured; you have been the cause of many sufferings to me!

but I will endeavour to forget them, I will pardon you all, since you are the father of my child, especially if you will promise me never to suffer your mind to be diverted from those duties which that sacred name imposes.

Saint Ange seized my hand, shed on it tears of repentance, and we now all gave free indulgence to those feelings of satisfaction with which the confession and a lucky interruption had inspired us. What happy chance had thus brought Saint Ange to Rémival on that day, and at such a critical moment? wearied at my long absence, observing also that Madame de Servol seemed inclined to separate me from her guests by thus detaining me at her country house, curiosity had determined him to pay us an unexpected visit; and, by means of a domestic, who had trusted him with a key, which gave him access

by a private door to the garden, he had even reached, without meeting with any interruption, my apartment, where a scene the most unlooked for had crowned his happiness, having first excited his grief and remorse.

Saint Ange passed the day at Rémival: he swore to me a thousand times that I should be his wife, whatever obstacles might be opposed to his obtaining such a felicity. These words made me tremble. I perceived clearly that Saint Ange feared an opposition on the part of his uncle, the motives of which he concealed from me. I besought him to explain himself: he changed countenance, shed some tears, but was silent, and soon after departed again for Calais, whence his long absence had certainly rendered uneasy the old commander. I passed another month at Rémival, whither Saint Ange came to see me

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almost every day; my father also paid us a visit, accompanied by his two old friends. Madame de Servol told them that ever since my residence at her country house, I had been confined to my chamber. My father appeared grieved at my indisposition, but suspected nothing. As to Saint Ange, he grew daily more sad and dejected, and we perceived that his grief visibly affected his health. It was in vain we urged him to confide to us his secret anxieties. He preserved an obstinate and cruel silence, still solemnly assuring me that he would obtain the consent of his inflexible uncle, or die in the attempt!

We had placed our little Charles with a nurse, on whose discretion and fidelity we knew we could rely, and who lived at the farther end of the village of Rémival. He had been now a

month in this apparently secure retreat, when one day this woman entered Madame de Servol's apartment, shedding a torrent of tears: "Madame," said she sobbing, "O Madame, how guilty I am! No, you will never pardon me, never!"—What have you done, Helen?—They have taken him from me, Madame; they have carried him away.—Who?—I know not, Madame, who dared during my absence.—Heavens! explain yourself. Whom have they taken from you?—O God! Madame, my nursling, the little Charles.—My child! have they robbed me of my child? Unhappy wretch!—Oh! spare me not, Madame, I deserve all your reproaches for my negligence; but could I suspect? could I foresee such an accident?....

Grief absorbed all my powers: Madame de Servol, not less affected,

though more prudent, endeavoured to console me, and questioned again the woman : Compose yourself, said she, and tell us at least how it happened.— I was gone out, Madame, replied Helen, only for a few moments : my young niece, a child of about ten years old, remained with the little Charles. A gentleman entered the cottage, asked for me, caressed the infant, and told my niece that he was going to carry it to neighbour Vitry, where I might enquire for it ; he gave the little girl a letter, went out with the child in his arms, and suddenly mounted a post chaise, which was presently out of sight of my astonished little girl. This, Madame, is the exact truth : you may judge of my surprise and grief, on returning to my dwelling !—And the letter, Helen, have you got it.—Here it is ; it is addressed to you Madame.—To me !

Madame de Servol took the letter which indeed bore her name on the superscription, and we both immediately recollected the hand writing of Saint Ange. The contents were as follow:

“Misfortune, Madame, which seems to have attended me even from the cradle of infancy, has just exhausted her last arrows on me. An invincible obstacle for ever separates me from her whom I love, whom I shall adore till existence ends. A cruel uncle, to whom I have confessed all, tears me away, snatches me from that spot where I have known the joys of love, the exultation of a father. Severe justice; honour even prescribes to me an union, which I detest, but which I cannot avoid! I felt it was impossible for me to announce this fatal intelligence to Mademoiselle Saint Brice: I should have

died in beholding her affliction. I have been therefore obliged to depart without seeing her.—But I am a father; and at least, if I rob her of her child, if I deprive her of this precious gift, the only being which can console me when far from her, it is with the pleasing hope of again presenting him to her, and requesting her to accept the hand of his father.

“ Dear and amiable friend, deign to console her, deign to procure my pardon for this. I have deprived her of a mother’s joys. Assure her of every fondness and attention that this helpless and beloved being may claim from him who gave it existence; give her my solemn promise that, though my secret is of that nature which I cannot at present reveal, a day shall come when she will know all, and will, I doubt not, pardon all, when the motives,

which now impose silence on me, are revealed to her. Farewell, Madame it is on you I rely to send me frequent intelligence of her whom I shall never cease to adore."

The letter had no signature: he had left me for ever, along with my child. Judge of my situation, my dear Jeanette.—A violent fever seized me. My friend, alarmed at my condition, wrote to my father, who presently came to Rémival, accompanied by M. de Servol. They informed us that the old commander of Mellery, who had for some days behaved coolly to them, without assigning any reasons, had left them one fine morning, together with his nephew, never apprising them of his intended departure, or even charging them to pay their adieus to the ladies. M. de Servol was quite enraged at their conduct, which he could

by no means comprehend, and my father interpreted it by saying that he had always looked upon the commander as an original. My father shewed me the utmost tendernefs; and, thanks to the obliging attentions of my friends, I recovered apace. He now told me that it was his intention to pursue his journey, and I departed with him, little anxious in what corner of the world we should next rest. You may suppose, Jeannette, I did not forget to thank my generous friend, who promised to keep up a correspondence with me, and to give me intelligence of Saint Ange, if ever she should hear from him.

We continued our journey thence, still under the same assumed name, visiting several other provinces of France, and were in Brittany when we received an account of the decease of Madame

de Servol, as well as of her husband, who did not long survive her. An epidemic disease, which then raged at Calais, deprived me of two friends; of the only woman too from whom I could receive any intelligence of Saint Ange and my child! What sufferings have I experienced, Jeannette! What accumulated misfortunes! You apprised us next of our total ruin: my father's illness succeeded; however, he recovered sufficiently to enable us to return to Meudon. There I lost the best of fathers, and you already are acquainted with the rest of my misfortunes. Oppressed with so many afflictions, hitherto I have not felt sufficient resolution to relate to you my secret adventure with Saint Ange; and shame and regret would have impelled me still to conceal it from you, if accident had not yesterday evening con-

ducted hither Saint Ange himself, who certainly is ignorant what is become of me, and little thinks that his beloved mistress is the poor Dascourt, whom he has enquired for, thus obliged to work for her subsistence! It appears from the letter he has dropped, that he still loves me, and that his hand is free! —Ah, Jeannette! if I could see him, if I could once shew myself to him! — But what am I thinking of? Can Saint Ange give his hand to a woman without fortune, without rank.....Oh, Jeannette!

CHAPTER XXI.

Her Wits begin to Work.

THE kind and simple Jeannette remained long mute with astonishment, at the surprising events she had just heard, and of which hitherto she had been far from supposing her friend could have been the heroine. Cecilia, the modest and virtuous Cecilia, was then a mistress, a mother, and her father had died uninformed of the mystery of her love! She had even concealed it as a secret from her dear Jeannette; and, though her error was the effect of misfortune, rather than of seduction, Cecilia blushed at the recollection: under such circumstances how could Jeannette have the heart to

reproach her? The severe Jeannette could only pity her friend, console and assist her with her advice. O my Cecilia ! said she to her on the conclusion of her story, through what a singular series of misfortunes has your evil destiny led you ! And this Saint Ange, this man who took your infant from you in so extraordinary a manner, could it be the same I saw here yesterday evening ! Oh, if I had known your secret, how I should have examined him ! There is every reason to suppose that, knowing you only under the name of Saint Brice, he is ignorant what is become of you, since the only confidante of your story, the amiable Madame de Servol, exists no more. As you alledge he is free, his hand is not yet given to another : if he knew that Mademoiselle still lives, and that she still loves him, he would restore her child, and probably also

give her a husband. Mademoiselle, an idea has just struck me: Madame de Saint Albin is certainly acquainted with Saint Ange, otherwise she would not have sent him here. I will go and see Madame de Saint Albin; I shall find again Saint Ange, and will lead him to your feet.—And to what purpose, Jeannette, to what end thus disturb his repose and mine? His uncle still lives; that inflexible old man still tyrannises over his nephew; you may perceive it by the letter Saint Ange has written to him. I am without parents, without fortune, without a single stay in this world. I should only find my Saint Ange to be again separated from him by ambition and avarice!—But your child!—Ah! my child, Jeannette, you are right; I forgot I was a mother!—Go, Jeannette, fly to Madame de Saint Albin; get

some intelligence of my lover; tell him my misfortunes; my sad situation; not that he may offer me services which my pride cannot accept of, but that he may restore me my child, that I may behold once more that beloved infant; that I may again embrace him, and I shall forget all my misfortunes!—

Jeannette lost no time: she flew to Madame de Saint Albin, whom she was so lucky as to meet just as she was going out: Madame.....—Who are you, my child?—I work, Madame, with Mademoiselle Dascourt.—Ah, Mademoiselle Dascourt! I am very much pleased with her embroidery.—He has given it you?—Certainly.—Monsieur.....Saint Ange? —Monsieur.....Saint Ange? What mean you, my dear?—Yes, that was the gentleman who came for it....—Well, that gentleman's name is not Saint Ange. He is a son of

one of the oldest friends of my family. He never bore that name.—That gentleman let fall in our apartment a paper.....—What? of any importance? —No, Madame; but he may nevertheless attach some interest to it.—Have you it about you?—I took the liberty of coming to ask his address of you, that we might send it him.—His address, my love; he is now far from Paris; he rides post; and in a few minutes I shall set out in order to overtake him.—Madame, I ask your pardon: This gentleman is not then Saint Ange, nephew of the commander of?

Here Madame Saint Albin was told that the carriage was ready. She beckoned Jeannette to withdraw; and Jeannette, timid and embarrassed, departed accordingly. As she was sorrowfully retracing her steps, she met a woman who stopped her, and pre-

fently threw her arms round her neck. Is it you, Jeannette? exclaimed she; Oh! what joy do I feel to see you again!—You regard me with surprise! Do you not recollect your old friend, the sister Emily, no longer a nun?—What! is it you, Emily? And by what happy chance have I thus met with you again? Oh! a very simple one, my dear Jeannette. All the religious orders are suppressed, and I am once more thrown on the world. I have quitted the convent these two years, and have since travelled much!.... Tell me now what is your condition in life! I have sought you at Meudon, through all Paris; I have good news for you.—For me, Emily?—Ah! you, my dear Jeannette! I give you joy! Your fortune is made, my love: it is in your power to reclaim your parents.—My parents! what do you mean? Do

you know them?—No, not I, but I will give you the means of finding them.—And are they rich?—Immensely so!—Ah, Cecilia, my beloved friend, then you shall labour no more. I shall thus find an opportunity of repaying my obligations to your family!—Who is Cecilia?

Jeannette related to Emily the misfortunes of Mademoiselle D'Eranville, concealing from her only the secret of her amour with Saint Ange. Emily took occasion from thence to moralize on human vicissitudes; and then gave Jeannette the following narration.

Thus, my dear, while destiny delights in humbling one, she bestows on another the means of exaltation, and no doubt it is Providence who has thus conducted me to you, that I might apprise you of the good fortune which awaits you! Listen to me with atten-

tion ! you must know, that after having quitted the receptacle for foundlings, I felt a wish to see again my relations who live in a very distant province. In passing near Chartres, night surprised me, or rather a dreadful storm which threatened soon to burst, obliged me to suspend my journey and seek a shelter. There was no inn on the road. I was trembling with apprehension I should be exposed to the tempest, when I discovered not far from me a little desolate building entirely insulated, and indeed the only one on an extensive plain of nearly four leagues. The rain already began to fall ; I ventured to enter this hovel and ask for hospitality : I was kindly received by an old man and a young female, who appeared to be his daughter. Thereupon, said the old man to her, give Madame some milk ; it will refresh

her; she seems extremely fatigued you will remain here to night, I hope. Therefa will share her bed with you, and you will be doing Jacques a real pleasure.—I fear I shall incommode you.—Who? what my daughter? Oh! no, she will be very happy to render you so small a service.

I accepted their kind offers, and presently sat down, with these good people, to a table on which Therefa spread a frugal collation. Conversation grew general. Do you come, Madame, from Paris? enquired my host.—Yes, Jacques, I have quitted for ever that city in which I once thought to have ended my days.—Has any occurrence of importance happened there lately.—The religious orders are suppressed, and I thus have been restored to liberty.—Ah! Madame was a nun, then?—Yes, of the convent for foundlings.—The convent for foundlings!

My host turned pale, and averted his countenance.—What is the matter, Jacques?—You have just pronounced a word which recalls to my mind the most unpleasant recollections.—How?—I had a brother, God rest his soul! the poor lad never committed but one fault in his life; and he felt such remorse on account of it, that I verily believe it shortened his life. Ah! I understand you: an infant, his son perhaps, whom he was obliged to place in the receptacle for foundlings.—No, it was not his child, it was a fine little girl of his master's: poor thing! he left it in an alley, just by the convent; a torn paper by its side.—What do you say? a torn paper by its side? and how long is that ago? Just twenty-six years to-day.—Ascension day? Merciful heavens! it is Jeannette!—You know this little girl then? She is still living!

—What is her father's name?—I must not reveal to you the names of her parents; but they are very rich!—If she was introduced to them?—They would receive her as the child of misfortune. —Deign to relate to me, good Jacques— I am not permitted to reveal the secrets of another. Send Jeannette to me: I will confess all to her; I will restore her to a family, which will be most happy in finding her again.

Delighted at this unlooked-for intelligence, I took leave, the next morning, of my kind and generous host, who again assured me that the parents of Jeannette would indulge her in every wish, if they could once more find her, and I continued my journey. Since that time, my own affairs, have diverted me from the design I had formed of communicating the circumstance to you. However, I sent a letter

to you at Meudon; I did not receive an answer; since my return to Paris, I have sought you every where in vain, and I now thank Heaven for having at length met with you. Farewell, my dear Jeannette, I am in haste; here is my address, and that of the good Jacques, a farmer near Chartres; instantly depart in search of this man, who is able to restore you to your family; and if you succeed, let Cecilia D'Erville share your prosperity.

The good Emily then embraced Jeannette, and left her.

CHAPTER XXII.

Farewell, Jeannette.

JEANNETTE returned, very thoughtful, to Cecilia. Her parents! it was possible to find them again, and she had learnt also that they were immensely rich! It was not for herself Jeannette desired riches or splendour; but for her friend, for Cecilia, to whom she would instantly give up the half of her inheritance. Cecilia then would labour no longer for her subsistence; Cecilia would be re-inflated in that condition of ease and leisure to which her youth had been accustomed, and Jeannette would thus repay the tribute of gratitude she owed to M. and Madame

D'Eranville. O Jeannette ! how did this idea gratify thy feeling heart ! Another thought also struck thy fancy, Jeannette.—If Cecilia should again meet with Saint Ange and her child, possessed of wealth, she might yet claim the hand of her lover ; and it was Jeannette who would render so many happy ! She would then reside with this fortunate couple, with their little Charles, to whom she would be a second mother. Her eye would meet their smiles of happiness ; they would call her their relative, their fond and beloved friend ! In what delightful colours, Jeannette, didst thou deck futurity ! For thyself alone, thou wouldst not have sought to quit the obscure condition to which thou hadst been accustomed ; thou wouldst not have gone to expose thyself to the troubles and anxieties which ever at-

tend a great fortune, and of which thy benefactors had offered a fatal example ! nor wouldst thou have contributed to verify the predictions which the dying D'Eranville addressed to thee, or have subjected thyself to the possibility of being thrown among those who would be unwilling, perhaps even averse, to acknowledge thee. But friendship renders thee capable of every thing ; it is to that ennobling sentiment thou art willing to sacrifice thy apprehensions and thy love for obscurity. The happiness of another, Jeannette, was thy aim, not thy own ; this motive alone inspired thee, and enabled thee to surmount all the difficulties which thy feeling heart suggested : these were many. Jeannette must go in search of her parents ; but, for this purpose, she must undertake a journey, and would require some money to pay her travelling expences :

Jeannette possessed not a single livre ; all she earned she gave to Cecilia. It was Cecilia who kept the purse, and this purse was seldom well supplied ; but Jeannette now recollected, that Madame de Saint Albin had given her an hundred francs for mending her veil and some other laces. These hundred francs were yet untouched : if Cecilia would part with half this sum, it would be certainly sufficient for the expences of her journey—but how could she ask this of a friend already embarrassed in her circumstances ? How could she tell her that she wished to leave her, to bid her farewell, though it was only for a month. Cecilia would then imagine that she was abandoned by all ; she would accuse Jeannette of ingratitude, and Jeannette could not say it was for Cecilia's happiness she laboured. What an embarrassing situation ! to

have at once to announce her departure to her friend, and also to require of her the half of what little she possessed?—But let us proceed; perhaps chance may furnish an opportunity of explaining circumstances and of making these indiscreet demands.

Jeannette was still making these reflections when she entered the apartment of Cecilia. The latter flew to embrace her: Ah, my friend! said she, my dear Jeannette, I have to apprise you of the happiest news! Monsieur de Verneuil is free: they have acknowledged his innocence; he has been here; he has enquired for you; he is restored to liberty, to happiness; and, moreover, he flatters himself, by means of the new laws, to be restored to the estates of his family, the eldest of which, by a former unjust custom, were enriched at the expence of the youngest. He is

happy, I repeat, and this kind friend wishes to repay us a hundred fold the trifling services it has been in our power to render him. He is instantly going to depart on his journey for his own province, and has every reason to think that he will triumph over the avarice of his brothers: Oh! what joy it has afforded me!—Have you as good news for me, Jeannette?—Madame Saint Albin—Madame Saint Albin, is not acquainted with Saint Ange; the person who came here, Mademoiselle, does not, never did bear that name—he is not your lover.—Indeed! what then was the name of that stranger?—I have not been able to learn; it was certainly not Saint Ange.—Yet, Jeannette, how could this letter in the handwriting of Saint Ange, come into the possession of a stranger? It is certainly his writing.—Who knows, Mademoi-

felle ! this letter was addressed to the commander ; this old gentleman may have received it, lost or confided it to some one.—You are in the right, so once more farewell to the hope of finding him.....Never, Jeannette, never shall I see him more ! What an unfortunate creature I am.—An invincible obstacle seems indeed to separate him from you—a capricious destiny, or rather a capricious lover ; for what motive could induce this young man to leave you ! to take from you also your child ? I confess, Mademoiselle, this action of his appeared to me very culpable in your relation, it was absolute cruelty ! If he wished or was obliged to part from you, he might at least have left you the fruit of his crime ; this might have consoled you.—Ah ! but it was perhaps to efface the traces of that crime at the recollection of which I have seen him

so often blush, that he deprived me of the only living proof of it. Indeed, Jeannette, he possesses honour, delicacy : he loved me, he does so still ; and though at present he submits to a cruel uncle, and yields to the untoward course of events, Saint Ange possesses a firm soul, and never will give up a design in which his future happiness depends.—But we know not where he is. Let us think no more of it, Jeannette, but await the events that time may develop.

Cecilia dejectedly bent her fine eyes, which were filled with tears, to the ground ; and Jeannette, full of her design, knew not how to impart it at present to her afflicted friend. Mademoiselle ?—What is the matter, Jeannette ? you look pale and tremble !...—Mademoiselle ?.....—Good heavens ! how you are agitated ! you fall at my

feet, Jeannette ! is that your place ? Come to my arms, and speak to me frankly. Have you any secret to communicate ?—Oh yes, Mademoiselle, a secret of the highest importance !—Speak then, you alarm me, and your condition deeply affects me.

Cecilia made Jeannette sit down by her, who at length resumed sufficient courage to speak to her as follows.

You know, Mademoiselle, that I am but a poor abandoned girl, first brought up by the charity of a convent, and since by the kindness of your revered parents ? Mademoiselle, I have learnt that mine still exist ; I am allowed to throw myself into their arms ; they expect me ; they sigh with impatience to see me.—What do I hear, Jeannette ? have you received intelligence of your family, and do you wish to know them ? The desire is natural, Jeannette, very

natural ; but remember the last advice my father gave you just before he expired ! In what circumstances are your parents ? Are they rich.—Yes, Mademoiselle, very rich.—Jeannette, said my father, *if you would abide by my counsel, you will remain in that happy ignorance in which you have lived hitherto : your parents have been so unnatural as to abandon you ! if they are opulent, you may expose yourself to their slights, to vexatious suits, probably from heirs whose hopes your presence has destroyed, and who will harass you with various persecutions !* Jeannette, now is the time to weigh these just reflections.—Never, Mademoiselle, have I for a moment forgot them ; but I feel sufficient resolution to resist all the allurements of ambition or avarice. A secret motive, which my heart cannot resist, impels me.—Oh Mademoiselle, permit me to

leave you, it will be only for a few days: I shall soon return; can you suppose that I will live or die otherwise than in your presence?—But, Jeannette, by what means have you discovered your parents?

Jeannette related to Cecilia her conversation with sister Emily: she then added: You perceive, Mademoiselle, there is not a moment to lose. In the course of two years, this peasant, the good Jacques, may have died, or may have left the province; it is of consequence that I should go in search of him immediately. You cannot doubt that I am grieved in leaving you at a time when disappointed hopes have plunged you into fresh affliction; but you have told me that M. de Verneuil is free; this friend will visit and console you.—Alas! Jeannette, he also is leaving Paris, every body abandons

me!—Mademoiselle, I feel that the energy which the motive that impels me inspires, would alone resist the pleadings of a heart, which is ready to break at the thoughts of leaving you; but reflect that it is only for a short time; that our—I mean, my happiness entirely depends on this important business, and that we shall meet again under happier auspices!—Ah, Jeannette! these fortunate parents may detain you, they may separate you from me for ever!—Never! never! what human power shall prevent my re-union with a beloved friend! If such is their intention, I will tell them: Keep your gold, your riches and all the splendour with which you have attempted to dazzle me: I prefer the indigence to which hitherto you have condemned me, provided I pass my life with my beloved Cecilia!—Go then Jeannette,

go and seek happiness, and leave me to tears, regret, and general desertion, for such is my sad portion?—But I afflict you! you weep, my kind Jeannette! Ah! far from me be the thought of retaining you, of abusing your friendship to oppose your elevation! This would be most cruel; I ought to prefer your happiness to my own.—Jeannette, you will want money: you know what we have here? here is an hundred francs: accept the half of them; take the whole if you want it: the work of my hands will suffice for my support, and I shall be consoled in thinking that this little sum may be of use to my friend.

Jeannette, affected at her words, shed tears, and imprinted kisses on the hand of Cecilia. O my friend, she exclaimed, how kindly have you spared my feelings! the half of that sum was

the object of my wishes ; I dared not ask for it, and you have offered it me with such generosity ! Since you require it, Mademoiselle, I will accept *fifty francs* ; and, if I have the happiness of seeing them fructify, you will permit me to restore them with interest : you will not surely hesitate to accept from the hand of your friend a restitution which she owes to you as well as to the memory of your dear parents, my generous benefactors !—Let us say no more on that subject, Jeannette ; *I esteem friendship too much to blush at it's benefactions.*—Oh ! how these words console me ! they inspire me with fresh resolution for the undertaking ! they give me courage to leave you !—Jeannette, I believe I understand you ; but I also know that friendship ought to place limits to the pleasure of receiving, as well as to that of

offering. Go, Jeannette, fly, and embrace a father, a mother, who will think themselves most happy in finding in their daughter a girl so amiable, so interesting as yourself.—Kind Cecilia! —In this box is deposited the paper which was found with you. Until now we have neither of us had sufficient curiosity to read it. Let us see what it contains.

This paper which once had been torn, and of which there remained only a part, was couched in the following terms.

“ The name of this child is Jeanne Vic...
baptised yesterday : but as her birth.....
her father. If you blame the cru.....
rid of her, accuse not his heart nor.....
her mother. The fatality which has pursu.....
perhaps of persecuting them. A day, ...
hospital, where they are desired to keep this.....
known.
Passenger ! have pity on abandoned
Innocence ! ”

The two last lines were in a different hand writing to the rest of the letter, they were marked with a pencil, and the words were ill-spelt; which shewed they were indited by an illiterate person! The administrators of the convent had signed at the bottom of this paper the date of the day and year in which they had found the infant. Jeannette pocketed this paper together with her little sum of money, and the next morning took leave, not without many tears, of her dear Cecilia, to whom she promised to write often, and to return as soon as possible. Let us follow Jeannette, to whom there will happen many adventures: we can pass some time before we again see Cecilia; especially as it is not her, but the amiable Jeannette who is the heroine of our story.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Reciprocal Tendernefs.

JEANNETTE, with her little parcel under her arm, and her papers in her pocket, a heavy heart, and her eyes filled with tears, proceeded without stopping, as far as Versailles, where she rested a short while. From thence she travelled to Trappe to dinner, and lay at Rambouillet: this was a long journey for a woman. During the night, she could not sleep; she was thinking incessantly on her dear Cecilia, who, most probably, did not enjoy herself much repose that night; and Jeannette, who felt as far removed from her, as if seas had separated them,

lamented her having left such an affectionate friend. Jeannette had never known the sentiment of love; but she could pity those who were subjected to this fatal passion: Cecilia, far from her lover, her little Charles, and Jeannette, appeared in her mind to have suffered all that adversity could inflict: Jeannette repented that she had thus left her a prey to her sorrows, and almost determined on returning the next morning to Paris; but presently she reflected on the probable consequences of her journey; and feeling, how important a change in her fortunes and situation would be to her friend, she grew more resolute in her design. Jeannette was gentle, even timid; but the character of her mind did not want firmness; and when she had formed her designs, nothing could divert her from executing them; she

united perseverance, prudence, and patience, in attaining her ends; and our readers will see in the course of our tale that she knew both how to undertake and to succeed.

The wakeful Jeannette perceived the morning dawn, and instantly proceeded on her journey; she passed successively through Epernon, Maintenon, and towards evening, found herself within a league of Chartres, the high steeples of which already attracted her attention. It was now she looked round for the hovel where Jacques resided, but no such building struck her attentive eye. At length she discovered, at about the distance of a mile, a little rustic cottage, towards which she instantly directed her steps. The day was declining; and if Jeannette was deceived, she would yet have a full league to travel through this desert plain before she reached the city.

Jeannette knocked at the low door of this desolate mansion, a female voice answered her, and it was presently opened. Is this the residence of Jacques, the peasant? enquired Jeannette.—Jacques, good woman? he has been dead long since! and I have succeeded him here.—What did you want of him?—Jacques dead! and where is Theresa, his daughter?—Theresa? how should I know? her affairs are nothing to me. If she owes you any thing, so much the worse: for you will never get paid; and yet I gave her a good sum for this cottage, such as it is: a very den, as you see; there is hardly room to turn in it.—Theresa then no longer resides in this country?—I know not where she is, nor do I care: I have other things to mind! Is that all you want?—Madame, it is almost night; is there any inn hereabouts?—Not a single

one : good night.—But if I must go as far as Chartres ! It is far of, is it not.—A short league ; and since this plain is safe, don't be afraid, they'll not run away with you. Good night.

Jeannette, shocked at the impertinence of this woman, quitted her with a melancholy heart, and the tears standing in her eyes. She was alone and without hope of discovering the mystery which was the object of her journey. Jacques no longer existed, and she was ignorant of his daughter's asylum.....What must become of her ? What resolution must she take ?

That of going at least to spend the night at Chartres: she determined so to do, and pursued her road with equal courage and resignation. It was night when she arrived in that great city, of which they were about to close the gates. Jeannette took the first street

before her and found herself in that of the Visitation. Opposite the Convent a woman of the place fell down through her own awkwardness, and had nearly involved Jeannette in her disaster, who immediately hastened to assist her to get up again; and the woman very kindly thanking her, regretted it not being in her power to return the obligation.—Pardon me, my good woman, replied Jeannette, you may render me a very great service; for I am a stranger in this city, and I wish to find an asylum where a female may pass the night with decency.—Come to my house, Madame: my husband will be charmed to receive you, after the obliging manner in which you assisted me. I live yonder: my husband, Bernard, is a journeyman joiner, and I sell fruit, greens, and all sorts of little things for a subsistence: we have a chamber with

two beds; if you would be pleased to accept one of them.

Jeannette was sensible to the obliging offer of the young Bernard: she entered her house, and was enchanted with the civility of her husband, who was still young, and was rocking a child of about four or five months old upon his knees. A frugal supper was served up, and Jeannette related to her hosts the little success she had obtained in the enquiry after Jacques and his daughter Theresa. She had scarcely pronounced these names, when Madame Bernard exclaimed: What! Madame, is it Theresa you are in search of? Behold her here! I am the daughter of the good Jacques who I had the unhappiness to lose eighteen months ago. Compelled by misfortunes to sell my thatched cottage to a jealous and bad woman, I afterwards married this worthy man;

and Heaven, in sending us a child, has blessed our labours and my little trade, which suits our ambition and our manner of living.

Ah! what! it is you, exclaimed Jeannette in her turn! that Providence has caused me to meet with by chance! O my God, I thank thee! I was afraid of returning without knowing what I wished to know!—What do you desire?—Have you heard your father speak sometimes of a poor little Jeannette, abandoned by his brother your uncle, and banished amongst the foundlings, on Ascension-day twenty-eight years ago?—How! without doubt! and two years since that, a sister of the hospital came to see us, and to inform us that the same Jeannette was still in existence; we expected her every moment; she is not yet come.—Perhaps you are the person?—Myself!—Ah, my

God, Bernard ! Look then ! behold the daughter of Monsieur Dericourt..... that child which they have so much lamented ! who was born to be happy ! Ah, Mademoiselle ! I am overjoyed to see you ! Your father is no more ; but you have a mother left, oh, inestimable happiness, and who will be very happy to see you again !—Where is she, Madame Bernard ?—Ah, hardly two steps from hence : she is our benefactress ; it is she who deigned to assist us with her purse at the moment of my father's decease ; in fine, it was she that married us !—What is my mother in this city ?—Two houses lower down. Good God, how astonished you will be when you see her ! when you learn her misfortunes and those of her husband ! she is still a young woman, forty-eight years old at the farthest. Handsome, tall, and well shaped : ah, look Bernard ;

see if she is not the perfect picture of her?...—Ah; it is striking, and from that resemblance alone I might have guessed that you were her daughter. Let us go, to-morrow morning, not later than to-morrow morning, we will go and see them together. How great will be her joy! and what pleasure shall I not experience in shewing my gratitude for what she has done for me, by restoring her daughter to her!

Jeannette put some questions to the worthy Bernard, who informed her only that her father had formerly been a military officer of note. In regard to the misfortunes which had thwarted him in life Madame Bernard kept silent: she said that secret was Madame Dericourt's; and she alone had a right to reveal it. Have I any brothers or sisters, said Jeannette?—Not any, Mademoiselle; you are an only daugh-

ter, and one day you will be very rich!—If I become so, my dear and feeling woman, I hope you will no longer have to continue in a business of so little profit to yourself.

Jeannette passed a restless night, agitated with horrid dreams; it seemed as if even her dear friend Cecilia was tormented, called upon her for succour, and reproached her with having caused her misfortune by her inconsiderate proceedings. Jeannette awakened sad, her eyes bathed with tears, and her heart violently beating, when she reflected on the approaching moment that was about to reunite her with her mother, a grand lady, a stranger to her till that very day.

Madame Bernard got ready her breakfast; and perceiving her trouble, she made every effort to raise her spirits, and to give her courage. Bernard then

went to Madame Dericourt, to know if she could be seen. He found that lady reading a letter, which appeared to afford her much pleasure. Bernard seized this opportunity to prepare her for the unexpected happiness which Heaven had sent her. He informed her that his wife had found Jeannette again, and that both of them were coming to throw themselves into her arms. Not any thing could equal the joy of Madame Dericourt, but her impatience to see and embrace her daughter. Bernard returned home; and Jeannette, then assured of the good reception with which she would be welcomed, followed the good Theresa, who presented her to her benefactress. Is it really true, exclaimed Madame Dericourt, when she perceived Jeannette? is this that child of misfortune? Are you my daughter Jeannette? and

do they not deceive me with a vain illusion?—Madame, this torn paper found near me.....Yes, that paper; I remember it; I have the other half of it; I have just found it again: here it is: and joined together reads as follows:

“The name of this child is Jeanne Victoire Dericourt: she was baptised yesterday. But as her birth has completed the misfortunes of her father. If you blame the cruel destiny which compels him to get rid of her, accuse not his heart nor his indifference towards her mother. The fatality which has pursued these unfortunates may be weary perhaps of persecuting them. A day will arrive when they will come to the Foundling

Hospital, where they are desired to keep this precious deposit, that it may be again known."

As to the two lines at the bottom, added Madame Dericourt, "*Passenger have pity on abandoned Innocence,*" they are the hand writing of Ferrand, of that faithless domestic, who.....But let us think only on the happiness of seeing you again, my dear daughter! How tall she is! how handsome! She resembles me; is it not so, Theresa, that she resembles me?—That is what I told her, Madame, replied Theresa; she is altogether a picture of you, and that proof would suffice to remove every doubt concerning her birth!—Behold her then at last, after twenty years privation! behold this daughter of a man whom fatality pursued till his death! Poor Felix! thou art dead, without

having enjoyed the happiness of embracing thy daughter! Oh, couldst thou leave the grave to partake the sweet delirium of thy disconsolate widow!—Madame.....—Call me thy mother, Jeannette; that that soft name may for the first time strike the ear of her that gave thee birth! I believe I have not any thing in me to keep thee at a distance: you should be free to express your love to me, as I am now to clasp you in my arms!

Jeannette answered to the tender effusions of that good lady; and forthwith to recompence Theresa and her husband for the zeal they had exercised in restoring her daughter to her, Madame Dericourt insisted they should both of them quit their present condition of life. Bernard was retained as keeper of the house, and Theresa entered into the service of Jeannette,

who they no longer called by any other name than Mademoiselle Dericourt. As for me, who am her historian, I shall be pleased still to give her, for some time, her first name, under which she has already so much interested us. Jeannette then, enchanted to find again a tender mother, and who appeared to her so eager to fulfil her wishes, blessed her stars, and, the very same day, wrote to her dear Cecilia of the happy change which had taken place in her situation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Love increases apace.

JEANNETTE was questioned, as might have been foreseen, by her mother, concerning all she had undergone from her birth. Jeannette related the history of her adoption by her benefactors, who no longer existed, and caused her good mother to partake the interest she experienced for the unfortunate Cecilia, but was silent as to her adventure with Saint Ange. Madame Dericourt, with her eyes brimful of tears, penetrated with gratitude towards those who had overwhelmed her daughter with favours, exclaimed; my child, this dear Cecilia must be assisted, must be

succoured : let us do better ; let us engage her to come and pass her life here near to us : that will be but a slender recompence for the bounties bestowed by her parents on thy forlorn infancy.—

Ah, my dear mother ! replied Jeanette, what an excellent heart do you possess ! How happy am I to be related to you ! Cecilia, my friend ! she will then no longer know toil, indigence ! I am going to write you these happy tidings..... Madame, you will henceforth have two children who will love you most tenderly !.....

Jeannette wrote a second letter to Cecilia ; and after what she had said to her before her departure, *that she could not blush at the favours of friendship*, Jeannette doubted not her friend would hasten to her, and, with a satisfied mind, she waited her answer.

During that time, elegant dresses

came to replace her simple habits ; and valuable jewels added a new charm to her attire ; in a word, she adopted the style suitable to her estate, and her fortune. Madame Dericourt introduced her every where, to her friends, and to her neighbours, and every one remained enchanted with the graces and wit of her daughter.

However, when the first moments of visits and feasts were gone by, Jeanette took the liberty to ask her mother the secret of her birth, and what could make her father resolve to abandon her in the manner he did to the lukewarm pity of strangers. Madame Dericourt caused her to sit down, and spoke to her in the following manner :

“ You have never loved my dear daughter ; you have told me so, and I believe you. You have not then inherited the heart, nor the fatal passions of

your parents ; which is truly a happiness for thee. Listen to me, Jeannette : you are going to hear a very singular story, which would assuredly appear a mere tale to every indifferent being, not well qualified to judge the human heart.

“ Felix Dericourt was the youngest son of Monsieur le Comte Dericourt, Marechal de Camp. Felix had two brothers older than himself, but of a very different character from himself. Felix was mild, timid, virtuous. Octavius and Roland were proud, ambitious, and debauched. The old Marechal preferred his two eldest sons ; so that Felix, early attached to a military life, was driven from his paternal mansion, and found himself alone, left to his own guidance, wandering from town to town, from garrison to garrison, without receiving any letters from his father, who had become a widower betimes.

An officer in Felix's corps was the only friend he could find worthy of his acquaintance. The name of this officer was Briceval—”

Here Jeannette interrupted her mother: Briceval! said she, that name calls to my remembrance.....During my infancy a M. de Briceval, who was an intimate friend at the house of D'Eranville. He had a son six years of age, who....—That might be, replied Madame Dericourt; let me continue, my dear child? Briceval then was the son of a man of fashion; Julius, his eldest, had gone to the West Indies, and had not been heard of for a long time. The father of both of them being dead, his widow had committed the folly of marrying again, and espousing a man equally destitute of rank and fortune. You know that formerly that was called a derogation. The

woman died in a short time, as well as her husband; and no pledge of their union except a daughter in her nonage, who being an orphan, was intrusted to the care of Briceval, her young brother, by the first marriage. Rosella, for that was the name of this young girl, was brought up at her brother's expence, who had placed her as a boarder in this city, at the house of a person called Madame Robert, an old friend of the family of Briceval.

“ The young Briceval, who did not partake of the prejudice which covered the idea of the birth of his sister Rosella with meanness, shewed towards that young person all the care of a tender father and a scrupulous guardian. She was sixteen years old when he came to see her at Chartres, accompanied by his friend Felix. Felix could not resist the first darts of love which at the same

instant pierced his heart and that of Rosella ; and whilst she mused on the change wrought in her, Felix returned sad and pensive with his friend, who, without being aware of the mischief he was doing him, was incessantly bestowing eulogiums on the charms and talents of his sister.

Behold then Felix in love ; behold him sighing, seeking solitude, concealing the state of his heart from every one, from his friend especially, who thought that his melancholy proceeded from the ill treatment he experienced from his family. Felix was fully sensible that neither his father nor his brothers would consent to his marriage with a girl of no rank or fortune ; and this certainty, far from weakening his love, seemed the more to increase it. Irritated by the difficulties which he foresaw, Felix delivered himself without reserve

to his passion, and cherished it as often as he could, with the view of her who was the beloved object. Felix often pressed his friend to make journies to Chartres to see the young Rosella. Briceval, without suspecting his friend's motive, consented to it, and every interview augmented the tenderness of the two lovers, who reciprocally understood each other without having ever communicated their mutual sentiments.

“ Felix was lively, heedless, and enterprizing ; he would at any rate obtain her that he loved ; and the excess of his passion rendered him blameable on the score of friendship. Madame Robert at whose house Rosella was brought up, was one of those women who possess neither principles nor delicacy. She did not esteem Rosella, for she found a thousand faults with her, and she would

have been very glad to remove her to a distance from her house. Felix after having well studied this woman's character, formed a bold project, and excusable only from the excess of that delirium which troubled his reason. Felix was fully satisfied that he could not admit Briceval into his confidence, or obtain his consent to the designs which he meditated : in consequence, after having struggled a long time between love and friendship, he gave the preference to the most predominant sentiment of the two. Felix pretending to Briceval that he had received a letter from his father to recall him home, quitted his friend, not without remorse at his conduct, for he was going to deal him a mortal blow ; since instead of returning to Mr. Dericourt's he went directly to Chartres, to Madame Robert's, with whom he desired to speak in private.

I love, said he to her, I adore Mademoiselle Rosella; who I am ready to marry in secret for the present: for I shall be some time before I can obtain my father's consent; but I shall obtain it. I have an aunt at Paris who loves me; and it is to her respectable mansion that I mean immediately to conduct your beauteous boarder, if you give your consent.

“ Madame Robert made some difficulties. A sum of gold decided her, and this despicable woman leagued with an insensate to plunge innocence into a most dreadful snare. They caused Rosella to come down stairs. They told her that her brother had sent for her; they would scarcely allow her time to make preparations for the journey: and the young Rosella, without any mistrust, from her inexperience, believed the false tale they related to her. A

Post Chaise is at the door ; she steps into it, after having embraced the perfidious Robert ; and behold her alone, tête à tête with a stranger, at the mercy of that ardent and passionate lover.

“ I shall not relate to you, Jeannette, with what diverse sentiments I was agitated, when I found myself alone with Felix ; for I am that unfortunate Rossella for whom that proceeding was preparing so many woes ! The carriage brought us in one day to Paris, a city that I had never before seen, and where I did not expect to find my brother, knowing that he was in another place. I made that observation to Felix who replied : That is true.....he is elsewhere at present, but he will rejoin us, Mademoiselle ; he is sure to rejoin us at Paris.

“ Felix doubtless little thought that he could read so well into futurity. I

was very much astonished, when Felix took an abode in Paris, to perceive that he caused me to pass for his sister: I would have spoken; but he said to me in a whisper: This evening I will explain this mystery to you. In fact, in the evening, when I found myself alone with him, overcome by fatal forebodings, I requested of him the design of that conduct, which had given me sufficient cause of alarm. Rosella, he exclaimed, and throwing himself at my feet, you see in me a lover who has employed a stratagem to possess you; but a timid and respectful lover, and burns to obtain his pardon from you, and a return worthy of his love.—Eh! what! Sir, then you have not conducted me hither to meet my brother?—What importance is a brother to you when you may find a husband here?—A husband! gracious heaven!....., You have

deceived me, you !.....Let me fly from you, false and dangerous man ! let me return to my peaceful dwelling ! I was there happy, I thought you virtuous !—Alas then—can I cease to be so in your eyes ! Is love a crime ? It is a sentiment that pleads excuse for every thing.—Neither the seduction, nor an elopement....—Rosella !—My brother ! good heavens, what will he think of me !—Nothing but what is advantageous to us both. When you have consented to give me your hand, I will present you to Briceval as my wife : he is my friend ; he will ratify the tender tie.—Why did you not ask his consent ? he had then reasons to refuse it ?—None ; on his part there is not any thing to fear ; but, Rosella, I have a father who is vain and ambitious..... Briceval would have been afraid....Rosel-

la, your hand, and we shall bring to reason both my father and my friend !

“ I listened to him no longer : I wept, I accused him, I was willing to go out, return to Chartres.....But, Jeannette, must I avow it to you ? Love pleaded in my heart in favour of the perfidious man ; it undertook his defence, and caused me to feel that of all the evils that might befall me, that of flying, and separating myself from him, was the most painful.....I continued weeping ; I did not yield, but I remained. To be short, Jeannette, you must know that friends, a worthy kinswoman whom he had at Paris, the tears, the prayers, all conspired to soften my resistance, and I had the weakness to contract a clandestine marriage with him !.....

“ In the mean time, Briceval, not receiving any letters from his friend,

whom he supposed at a great distance off, or from me, whom he thought always at Madame Robert's house, posted to Chartres, and remained very much astonished when he learnt that Felix had come to fetch me in his name. Briceval bestowed the most severe reproaches on Madame Robert, who perfectly acting the part of a person taken by surprize, excused her complaisance, grounded on the friendship which united Felix to Briceval, a friendship that had not given her the least doubt concerning the intentions of the former.—Whither are they gone, Madame? these perfidies?—Sir, I know not, since they are not with you!

“ Briceval was in a fury: he swore that he would find his sister again, and that he would be revenged on a traitor.—But where to find them?.....During the time that he travels, searches,

and seeks for information, an adventure happened to us that we might have foreseen, and which commences the course of our long misfortunes....But stop, Jeannette ! what does Theresa want with us ?”

CHAPTER XXV.

Wherein many Heroes appear and disappear.

Here Madame Dericourt is interrupted by Theresa, who delivers a letter to Jeannette; Jeannette, would discreetly put off the reading to another time: her mother prevails on her to satisfy her curiosity immediately: it is without doubt a letter from Cecilia, from your dear friend?—No, Madame; I thought so at first, and my heart already palpitated with delightful expectation; but this letter is in a hand writing absolutely unknown to me. With your permission, we will see from whence it is addressed to me.

Jeannette read aloud:

“Mademoiselle, I am the landlady of the house you resided at in Paris with Mademoiselle Dascourt....”

Jeannette broke off: Dascourt, my dear mother, is the name that Mademoiselle D'Eranville assumed in that house, not to expose that of her family, left a prey to indigence. Let us proceed:

“With Mademoiselle Dascourt. Excuse me if I have the heart to afflict you by informing you of a shocking event....Your friend....She has not been able to receive or read either of your two letters. The very day of your departure....what do I say? it was in the evening, a guard came, charged with an order to carry off Mademoiselle Dascourt, to conduct her to a state prison. The guard and his followers have taken Mademoiselle from me; they have torn her from my arms.....I am ignorant whither they have conducted her. Far

enough off without doubt; for they spoke of an hundred leagues at the least....The next day I wished to carry this news to Mr. de Verneuil, your friend, but he had set out on the long journey he had proposed. An incident had hastened his departure. I have not been able to find defenders for that young person, victim doubtless of some mistake; for she is so wise, so modest! she is an angel that they persecute!.... Pardon me, Mademoiselle, if I have taken the liberty of breaking the seal of your last letter! but I could not leave you ignorant of the accident which has happened to your friend, and which must very much afflict your feeling heart!"

"I have the honour to be, &c.

FARE *widow* AUBRY."

We may easily judge of the state Jeannette was in after the reading of

that fatal letter ! Cecilia carried off by a guard !....Conducted they know not whither !....The same day of Jeannette's departure ! she had quitted her friend in the moment of misfortune !.....And who then pursues her ? Who are the barbarians ?

Jeannette gave herself up to despair, and would have set off instantly to Paris. She must gain information of her friend, she must find her again !..... Madame Dericourt employed all the strength of her reason and prudence to calm her weeping daughter. She at length succeeded ; but Jeannette still persisted in her project of going to Paris. Madame Dericourt consented to it, and would even accompany her thither ; but the day is far advanced ; and the journey must be put off until the next morning. How long did that delay appear to Jeannette, she is compelled,

and must nevertheless subscribe to it: Madame Dericourt perceiving that she was somewhat consoled, resumed the thread of her narration in the following terms:

“ My recital will not prove long, my dear child: and perhaps be very little interesting to you at present; yet I believe you possess sufficient fortitude to give a moment's truce to your grief: the misfortunes of your own family ought to affect you as much at least as those of your friends; and besides it is of consequence that I should reveal to you the secret of your birth, to the end that you may afterwards submit to what I expect from you.

“ Felix and myself were then at Paris, happy, quiet, and more like lovers than a wedded pair, when one day that I was alone, I saw two officers enter the apartment, who, with an haughty

air, and without taking off their hats to me, asked me if that was the house of Monsieur Felix Dericourt?—Yes, gentlemen.—Is he at home?—He will return immediately.—We will wait for him.

“ These two insolent men sat down, sneering; and staring at me, one said to the other; Is this the little lass they told us of? What do you say to her, Roland?—and you Octavius?—She is not amiss.—Yes, to gratify a whim.

“ My countenance was suffused with blushes, and I was ready to faint away when Felix entered, who was struck with astonishment when he recollected his two brothers. Are you here? said he to them fiercely.—You see we are; we come to compliment you on your conquest: she is pretty; but doubtless you are not serious?—Very serious!.... and I desire you to cease, or to retire.—

Gently! we are charged with our father's order, who is with us at Paris, and who commands you to return home.—Is my father here?—He orders you to follow us.—Heavens! Never!... Which if you refuse, a good *Lettre de Cachet* will secure you and this girl for him.—Get out of my house, wicked men! Get out of my house. Go, and tell the barbarian that sent you, that no power on earth is able to break the knot that attaches me for ever to this inestimable woman.

“The brothers were about to reply; but another officer came in; and the sight of him increased my trouble and the confusion of Felix; it is Briceval himself!....

“This was a day for surprises. To tell you, Jeannette, how all these troublesome visitors had discovered our retirement, and met there by chance

at the same time, would be to enter into too trifling details, and which the probabilities of the events of life ought to make you readily conceive. Briceval then entered, and I exclaimed: My brother! Her brother, resumed Roland Dericourt! what! is this the little plebeian, to whom the gentleman's mother gave existence!—And this woman to be our sister, added Octavius, foaming with rage!....

“Felix stood thunderstruck, as well at the imprudence of his brothers, as at the unexpected appearance of his friend, whom he had betrayed. Briceval recollected Felix's brothers; he viewed them with indignation: then turning towards Felix, he said to him mildly: is she really your wife!—She is, replied Felix timidly.—’Tis well, I approve these ties, said Briceval, and will assert them against every insolent

person that dare gainsay them !—Let us go brother, interrupted Octavius ; let us leave these people to grow proud at the dishonour of our family !....

“ They went away, and Briceval, following them to the stair case, cried out to them: Gentlemen, I shall find you again another time!

“ Briceval, being left alone with us, then addressed us with just reproaches ; but at last he grew calm : And why, said he to us, why, ungrateful as you are, had you not sufficient confidence to reveal your secret to me? Do you believe I would not have consented to your happiness? and do you not know that I myself am sensible to love?.... Know that I am so, as well as you, but in secret also, a husband and a father? Yes, I have a son two years old, and I have married a charming woman, but whose birth is still more obscure than

that of Rosella. You look at me Felix, and you can scarce believe me; you, who seldom quitted me, who travelled with me, that I could have, during that time, spun out an intrigue? Felix, the same prejudice which engaged you to conceal your love for my sister, compelled me to silence in regard to you; our hearts were worthy of a mutual understanding, but they were silent?.... Come then to my arms, happy pair, whom, I love; come and embrace a man who is much more your friend than brother !....

We pressed this generous relation to both our hearts; and our happiness was only troubled from the fears of Felix at the sole idea of his father being at Paris. He was ignorant of his address; his brothers had departed without giving it to him : if he had known where to have found that irritated father, he would

have gone to throw himself at his feet, he would have endeavoured to have obtained his pardon : But where is he ?—deceived by Octavius and Roland, he is capable of proceeding to the last extremities towards Felix, whom he never loved : what a situation !—

“ Briceval passed the day with us, and at his departure my husband found more courage and a greater fortitude in himself, to brave the strokes of fate.

“ The next morning we received the following dreadful note from Briceval.

“ I am lost, if I do not fly, Felix ! yesterday your two brothers, whom I met insulted me : I challenged them, like cowards they jointly attacked me ! I brought one to the ground and dangerously wounded the other : they cried out murder : and I had just time to save myself. I am setting off, I know not whither ; I fear the utmost from

their father's vengeance : try to get out of the way ; for in his despair, he is capable of every thing. Adieu !....”

This fatal news deprived me of my senses !—I was with child and I brought you into the world, my dear daughter, a month before the time prescribed for your birth !—Judge of the embarrassment of my husband ! he caused his daughter to be suddenly baptized, and returned home ; but, oh, what an increase of grief ! the house is full of archers ! a guard shews Felix a *lettre de cachet*.—They ask for the husband, the wife, and even the child !....

The whole forms a dreadful confusion and uproar !....My husband forms a violent resolution ; he writes a letter, tears it in halves, and gives one of them to Ferrand his domestic. Take this paper, said he with so low a voice that I could not hear him ; carry it

with the infant to the foundling hospital: it is the only asylum I can give it against the rage of its persecutors; perhaps we may some day find it again !....

“Ferrand escaped secretly with the innocent babe ; he run like a madman ; but in the court before the church of Notre Dame, he imagines that he is pursued : fear takes possession of his senses : he has not strength sufficient to reach the hospital, and deposits the infant and the paper in the first alley he finds open. He goes out of it like a person out of his senses, returns to his master’s house, finds that he is carried off by the officers of justice, saves himself for ever by leaving the house and returning to his own country, here, near to Chartres, where he relates all these events to his brother Jacques.

“In fact, scarcely had Ferrand gone

out, than my husband was dragged away by the guard and his followers: he could only cry out to me: Rosella, Rosella! do not be uneasy about your daughter she is in safety: Some day....

“He could say no more to me: so that I was for a long time ignorant what had become of my child!....

“What a shock to a woman who had just brought a child into the world! I remained a long time in all the madness of despair; and without doubt, had I not been in that cruel state for which my tormentors evinced some degree of pity, the monsters would have made me partake the same hard lot as my husband. I owed my recovery to the care of some charitable neighbours; and when I recovered my reason, I learned, by a letter from my husband, that he was confined at Saint Lazare, by his father’s power, who had

obtained the unjust and barbarous order. My husband wrote to me that all his letters were previously read, and that he could give me no other details, than those which they permitted him to transmit to me. He informed me that he was ignorant of the asylum where Briceval had hid himself; that Roland, whom he had killed, died on the spot; but that Octavius, who was only wounded, had accused him of assassination. Their father had instituted a criminal process, for contumacy, against the pretended assassin, and considering the rank of Mr. Dericourt and his protectors, furnished every reason to believe that he would obtain a degrading sentence against Briceval and his family.....

“My husband did not tell me, where he had placed his daughter in the excess of his despair: he thought, with-

out doubt, that I had known her asylum from Ferrand, who he presumed was always with me: but that domestic had disappeared from the very day of our misfortune, and I was plunged into the most cruel ignorance concerning the lot of my child. I answered Felix: but my letter never reached him, and they carried their cruelty to so great an extreme, that they intercepted all his. I was informed also, that it was dangerous for me to remain in Paris. From that time I was assisted by that rare blessing, a friend; a lady, who possessed some moderate rents and some few lands in Picardy, and I settled with her in the environs of Amiens. I hoped some day to obtain the liberty of my husband, and I sought for protections every where: but alas! where can innocence find them?

Four years elapsed, at the end of

which period I learned the death of my husband's father. This old gentleman, for some time, seemed to have abandoned the process which he carried on against the contumacious Briceval. They also informed me that this last, more tranquil concerning the consequences of the process, had returned to Paris, where he resided near the suburbs of Saint Germain, with his only son; for he had lost his wife. I then returned myself to Paris, where I did every thing in my power to discover my brother: but all my inquiries were fruitless: and how in fact is any one to be found who conceals himself in that great city !....

I took fresh steps to obtain the liberty of Felix, and at last I succeeded; but woeful to relate! Felix, pressed down under the weight of his misfortune, was in no condition to profit by it.

An incurable distemper conducted him insensibly to the tomb; and at the instant I was going to snatch him from his prison, I received from him the following letter, the last words he had been able to trace :

“I am informed, my dear Rosella, that my father is dead, and that my brother Octavius has taken possession of all his property. I am also assured that you can break my chains....Oh my loved wife ! how can I inform you of the fatal blow which is about to strike me ! Preserve, O preserve your cares for our child whom you may yet draw out again from her melancholy asylum..... I die, I expire, my dear Rosella, and when you shall have received this letter, perhaps your husband will have ceased to exist !.....I die, my dearest friend, a victim to love ; and above all, a victim to the rigour of a deceived fa-

ther.....Alas ! he expects one ; and it is only in the other world that he will know the heart of his son.....Adieu, Rosella, adieu for ever.”

“ This letter was like a thunder-bolt to me. I flew to the prison, where they informed me that I had lost my husband....In my grief I would have gone and have loaded the infamous Octavius with my reproaches. I was prevented; but the persons who managed my affairs compelled that covetous brother to restore one half of his father’s inheritance. He was constrained to do it, and revenged himself, by renewing the criminal process which his father had instituted against my brother : Octavius had discovered Briceval’s retreat in Paris. The latter saved himself, and escaped a second time from the snares which his enemy had laid for him ; but, alas ! Octavius gained his suit, and

Briceval, though absent, was condemned to an infamous exit !....

“I shall spare you, Jeannette, the detail of the tears which I shed when I learned these melancholy tidings. I was then in the country. Briceval, who from the noise which my suit with Octavius had occasioned, had discovered my retreat, came to visit me there with his son, who was then about six years and an half old. We wept a long time together ; and it was at this period that Julius de Briceval, the elder brother of the unfortunate, returned from the West Indies, possessor of a considerable fortune. The public voice had acquainted him with our misfortunes, and the disgrace which an unjust condemnation had shed upon his name. He came to see me, scolded at first ; but when convinced of his brother’s innocence, he consoled him, and swore

he would draw down vengeance on his enemy. Briceval could not survive his shame. We lost him in my house; he expired with grief in my arms, after having requested as a last favour, "that, if we should ever find again my daughter, Jeanne Victoire Dericourt, she should be united to his son, he gave an order to the same purpose to this young child who was kneeling near his bed, and Briceval expired in the persuasion that a prosperous day would arrive, which would restore my daughter back again to me, and that I would then make amends for all the evils my clandestine marriage had caused him, by uniting these two children of misfortune !....

"As soon as his eyes were closed, Julius, my elder brother, undertook the education of the young Briceval, his nephew; he took the boy with

him ; and to avoid the scandal with which his name was tainted, he changed it, gave a supposititious one to the child, and took him to travel along with him. Thus, I remained alone a prey to my grief and my complaints ! An event increased my fortune ; Octavius, that base brother of my husband, was killed in a duel ; (I have always suspected that it was Julius in order to revenge Briceval ;) and my marriage giving me the right of succession, I found myself heiress to the whole fortune of the Dericourts. I was rich, Jeannette, but always unhappy. I was ignorant of what could have become of my daughter....My husband was dead, and had not in reality discovered the asylum where she was concealed..... However, two years after, more or less, I came to reside in this city, when a man, pale and emaciated, came one

day to throw himself at my feet: Alas! cried he, is it Madame Dericourt that I behold! ah! you are going to relieve my heart, overcharged, from a long time back, with the weight of a most excruciating remorse.....Deign to recollect Ferrand, Madame, formerly servant to your husband, he to whom, in a dreadful moment, he intrusted your newly born infant!....

I was much affected, and interrogated the man; he informed me of the abandoning of my daughter! I ran to Paris: I enquired at the Foundling Hospital. They informed me that they had confided my child to the care of two married persons, whose name and address they gave me. I flew to M. D'Eranville's house; they knew not what had become of him, neither of his wife, his daughter, nor of that same

Jeannette, the orphan, brought up by them, and well known to those of whom I enquired. All that family is ruined, said they to me, and plunged in misfortune; and there is every reason to believe that it has quitted Paris!....Judge of my grief, Jeannette; I returned hither: Ferrand no longer existed: but Jacques, his brother, informed me that an ex-religieuse had been at his house, and told him that she knew my daughter. I scolded the man for not having obtained further information. At last I grew more resigned; and waited till some lucky circumstance should restore you to my love, and Heaven has at last deigned to grant me that favour!....

Behold, Jeannette, the secret of your birth, and the melancholy recital of the misfortunes of your mother....Another

opportunity you shall know what it is she expects from your gentleness of disposition, and delicacy of sentiment..... It is late, Jeannette; to-morrow we must travel, I put off until another day the details which I ought to give you, before I prescribe my will to you.

CHAPTER XXVI.

We see many similar Marriages.

JEANNETTE, from one circumstance in her mother's recital, foresaw the aim of the orders she was going to prescribe to her: but she paid but little attention to it at the moment. Affected by the rapid and singular events which had been described to her, moved with the remembrance of her friend Cecilia, victim, without doubt, to an arbitrary order, Jeannette could think of no object during the night but the unfortunate D'Eranville. She arose, dressed herself in haste, and went to rejoin her mother, whom she found ready. Let

us depart, my dear daughter, said Madame Dericourt; let us lose no time, for we must return back again to-morrow: for the day after I expect company, (she smiled,) relations that you will doubtless be charmed to know.

Jeannette and her mother got into the post chaise, which flew to Paris, where they arrived a little before night. They went immediately to Cecilia's lodgings, where they learned from the mouth of the landlady, the same intelligence that she had before notified to them by letter. Madame Aubry knew no more. Jeannette caused her to repeat the circumstances of the carrying her friend off: she learned that Cecilia had exclaimed, when shew as following the guard: Ah! Jeannette!... why art not thou a witness to the misfortunes of thy friend !....

Jeannette shed tears, and retired in despair: the next morning she ran with her mother to the houses of several magistrates; they were ignorant, or feigned to be ignorant, of the lot of Cecilia; and in the afternoon, after having exhausted every means of information the mother and the daughter departed once more for Chartres, where grief and regret pursued them.

Madame Dericourt employed a thousand methods to calm the grief of her daughter; she could only benumb her feelings for a while: Jeannette remained inconsolable. The next day after their return, Madame Dericourt addressed Jeannette in these words:

“My daughter, my dear Jeannette, you have seen that I have done all in my power to assist you in your researches: I have complied even with your slightest wishes; they prove your

gratitude to those from whom you have received favours: they cannot fail being pleasing to me. At present, my dear child, when I do not possess a single hope to discover the traces of your friend, leave all to time; act like your mother, who has passed twenty-eight years far from her daughter, hopeless of ever finding her again, and who nevertheless obtained that favour from Heaven. There is in life, Jeannette, events so extraordinary, that all human prudence can neither calculate nor prevent. Those only who have not met with my trials, doubt the caprices of fortune: both of us have experienced them, Jeannette, and we are prepared for every event, in order that we should not be surprised!.... Oh! that! my dear Jeannette, I must speak to you on another subject.

“I told you, I believe, that Julius

de Briceval had carried his young nephew with him to America; but that nephew is no longer an infant: he is at present a young man thirty years of age, tall, well-made, and very amiable. Julius and his nephew have taken advantage of the new laws to annul the unjust sentence given formerly against Briceval; and they have succeeded in reinstating his memory: in consequence of which they have resumed their real names, and it is them that I expect to day. I was reading the letter that gave me that assurance, at the same moment when Barnard came to inform me that I was going to embrace my daughter..... Jeannette, I recommend this young man to you; recall to mind that his father was unhappy only because he approved my union with thine. Recollect that Briceval, on his death-bed,

commanded his son to give his hand to you: and that I promised him your consent to that marriage, and that thus, from infancy, young Briceval and yourself are destined to become man and wife. Have you not yourself told me that in the house of M. D'Eranville you called the little Briceval *your little husband*? Happy presentiment of the tender tie by which you were one day to be united! He is coming Jeannette; he knows, as well as his uncle, that I have had the happiness to find you again; I informed them of that pleasing news by an express that I sent to meet them. I require of you, my dear child, that you will accustom yourself from this very day, to regard that young man as your future husband.....Jeannette, you return me no answer? your heart is free; you have assured me of it?—Dear mother, it is

true; but is his heart the same?...My nephew's, oh! I will answer for his heart; I never have heard say, that he had given it to another. Be easy on that point.....Well, shall I have any difficulty in obtaining from you the promise which I desire?—Madame.... I have always shunned the bands of hymen. It is, however, the aim of every virtuous and modest woman.—At my age, Madame, at twenty-eight years old! it is rather late.—You will be the better judge of the happiness of the conjugal state.—What! scarcely have I the felicity to embrace my dear mother, than she presses me to separate myself from her!—Never, no, my dear child, never will I quit you, nor your husband. We will live together; and perhaps before I die, I shall have the happiness to see you a mother in your turn. Oh! give me that satisfaction?

—Madame permit me to object to you
—Jeannette, remember then that I
 am engaged by an oath to a dying man,
 whose last will ought to be respected.
 I shall feel pain, my dear daughter, to
 use the rights I have over you; and it
 would be in the utmost extremity that
 I will take upon myself to say to you:
 I insist upon it, I will have it so.

Jeannette seized her mother's hand,
 which she covered with kisses. Dearest
 mother, said she to her, your expecta-
 tion shall not be frustrated. So much
 goodness pierces me to the heart; yes,
 I will obey you: Never so little as I
 may be inclined to marriage, if my
 cousin does not displease me too much.
 &.....I will marry him.—Oh! he will
 please you: he is such a delightful
 gentleman. He also knows that in
 you he will see his wife; and he is en-
 charmed with the idea.—Assure your-

self then, Madame, of your daughter's submission; but Cecilia, Madame, Cecilia!....Is it at the moment when friendship is drowned in tears, that I must light up the torch of hymen!

Then her tears began afresh to flow.—The good Madame Dericourt hastened to dry them up; she embraced her daughter, who was grown a little more calm, when Messieurs Briceval were announced.

At that name Jeannette started. She saw an old man enter; he was very fat and short, but brisk, and of a merry countenance. Behold the uncle said Jeannette to herself: as to the nephew, he appeared to her far above the praises which Madame Dericourt had bestowed upon him. Tall, well made, endowed with all the graces, and of an excellent voice, his looks alone immediately decided Jeannette in favour of

the projected marriage. Here we are, my dear sister, said the uncle to Madame Dericourt; but is that my niece, Jeannette, the child of an unfortunate brother?—You see her, dear brother.—Briceval, pursued the uncle; hold, my friend, look then at your cousin. Is she amiable, hey?...Odds bobs you are going to be a happy man! but why do you stand looking at her there? Embrace her, then, simpleton? At your age was it necessary that I should be told these things?....—Dear uncle, replied the young man mildly, that is a favour that ought to be merited, before it should be dared even to be asked.—I am charmed, interrupted Madame Dericourt, that you think my daughter amiable: but her charms are nothing in comparison to the virtues of her heart. How happy will he be, who shall possess a wife so interesting!

Briceval sighed, and lifted up his eyes to Heaven. His uncle, his aunt, and Jeannette herself, were persuaded in themselves that that sigh was the effect of the idea of the happiness he was about to enjoy. But you are very well, dear brother, said Madame Dericourt to the big Julius; I think you have got fatter in the few months you were away; how does that come about?—'Pshaw! dear sister don't mention it, I am just come from wearying myself at the country house of a silly woman who had desired me to direct some buildings carrying on there. My nephew during that time resided at her house in Paris. I made my young man come to me: but as soon as I knew that the mistress of the house followed him I set off in a twinkling, and here I am—always merry, always the same?—What would you have more, my

dear sister, I have lost my dignities, my cross, and a part of my fortune; well, I console myself by thinking that all those things are doubtless for the general welfare, and I always laugh and drink.—You do right: I have visited my cellar purposely on your account; I have laid aside such wine!.....So much the better; that seems like a loving sister. I am of opinion that we ought to examine them directly?—Willingly; with all my heart.

Madame Dericourt rung the bell; the breakfast was brought in; and whilst the uncle drank and laughed, Jeannette and her cousin timidly regarded each other without daring to speak a single word. In the mean time it seemed to Jeannette that she had seen that young man in some place; and on his part, Briceval was not assured but that he had met Jeannette in some

company or other. They reciprocally communicated this doubt, and could not divine where they had seen each other. As to the rest, Jeannette was enchanted with her cousin, although he appeared a little cold and melancholy. On his side, Briceval thought his cousin very amiable, and these young persons very soon appeared to understand each other very well.

Julius and Madame Dericourt are enchanted to see their children reunited. The day passed in reciprocal congratulations, and every body is content. Every body !.....Should I thus class under a general head that satisfaction which did not sparkle equally upon every countenance !.....Briceval is melancholy ; he is civil, and was gallant with his cousin ; but does he feel for her as much tenderness as she begins to experience for him ?.....

Jeannette was also thinking incessantly

fantly on her friend, and that sole remembrance troubled the pleasure she ought to have enjoyed at a change of condition so happy for her. However the dissipation, the idea of her marriage, the tender consolations of her mother, all gave some diversion to her grief, and a month slid away in feasts, in pleasures, in preparations for the wedding ; for all is arranged and decided between the relations and the young folks. Two words were sufficient between them : Cousin, I only perform my duty by complying with my mother's wishes.—My dear cousin, the command of my father is still fresh in my memory. This is what Jeannette and Briceval said to each other. Briceval has often secret conferences with his uncle ; and always comes out from them with the tears standing in his eyes, whilst the brow of the old gentleman

is wrinkled with anger. What can be the subject of their secret conversations? Jeannette puts that question to her mother; her mother is as ignorant of the matter as herself. Madame Dericourt speaks of it to Julius Briceval: Julius answers that 'tis nothing, but some reproaches he has made his nephew, in respect to some of his former youthful tricks, and that's all.

A final arrangement is made. It is decided that the marriage of the young couple should take place at Chartres, and that afterwards they should all go together to Paris to pass the winter, where Madame Dericourt had some property. That loving mother was charmed at the idea of enabling her children to enjoy the pleasures which that great city offers at that season of the year. Jeannette was besides going to appear there in a most brilliant man-

ner, and she was to enjoy all the privileges of her dignity and fortune. Madame Dericourt, in favour of that marriage, had endowed her daughter with two or three farms and a good estate. She has besides an hotel at Paris: Jeannette is rich beyond her wishes, and yet Jeannette is not content. During the silence of the night, fatigued with the different pleasures she had tasted during the day, she says to herself: Whilst I enjoy all the conveniences of life, my friend suffers, and weeps perhaps in the gloomy horrors of a prison! Ungrateful that I am! stunned with a chaos of visits, entirely confined in the society of my relations, who leave me not a moment of repose, I forget Cecilia! Cecilia, to whom I have promised an eternal friendship, whom I ought to find again, whom I only quitted with the prospect of mitigating

her misfortune ! Cecilia, she is ravished from me ! She perhaps accuses Jeannette, and can Jeannette tear herself away from the arms of those to whom she is so dear, to go to seek her friend ? Where ? Where good heavens ? Unjust and barbarous fate, have you separated us for ever ? Shall I never see you again, friend of my infancy, Cecilia, that I would now make so happy ? But what am I saying ? from henceforth she never can be so : far from her lover, far from her son, Cecilia.....Let us hide the fatal secret for ever : may this fault of my friend never escape from her heart or mine. Let us not cover her name with the seal of dishonour : she suffers already sufficiently, unfortunate woman !....

This was frequently the nature of Jeannette's thoughts in respect to Cecilia ; but she was going to Paris ; and

the entertainments of that brilliant abode occupied her imagination much less, than the desire of seeking after Cecilia, of gaining information concerning her, and perhaps of succeeding in procuring tidings of her. It appeared to her, that in the place where Cecilia had formerly dwelt, Jeannette would have less pains to meet her again. Then she inwardly promised to visit the magistrates, to employ every possible resource to find her, and to break her fetters, if she was still loaded with them. This was the sole motive which made Jeannette desirous of undertaking the journey to Paris.

In regard to her marriage, as it had been contracted, resolved, and decided from her infancy by her relations at the death-bed of Briceval, Jeannette neither retarded nor hindered it. She nevertheless perceived that she loved

Briceval better than any other man, and the wedding in her eyes wore a lovely aspect. Briceval on his side, appeared to act from the same principles; he seemed to fulfil a promise, and to demonstrate neither love nor repugnance. His behaviour was civil; but more clear-sighted eyes than those of Jeannette would have perceived that he resigned himself, and that he was tormented with some secret chagrin; nevertheless he did not complain, and his uncle was, without doubt, the only person who possessed his confidence. Madame Dericourt, blinded by the excess of her happiness, after so many misfortunes, believed, or was willing to believe, that the young folks mutually adored each other. She made the smallest civilities of Briceval to appear of consequence in the eyes of Jeannette: and to the latter, the slightest expressi-

ons of Jeannette were interpreted as proofs of love ; so that the young couple were married, persuaded that they were both of them two amorous fools.

Thus the marriage was celebrated, as many others which we frequently see, with sufficient indifference, and as an affair of calculation and contract. Some days after, the day of their departure for Paris was determined ; the day arrived, but the old Julius, confined by his gout, would not accompany his family. He even insisted that they should make him a promise before they set out, to return soon back to him. He was consequently left to the care of Bernard and other intelligent domestics ; then Madame Dericourt and her two children departed to go and inhabit this elegant hotel, which the mother had ceded to her daughter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A husband like unto many.

LET us take up our residence with our friends in their elegant abode, situate in University Street, and let us enjoy our share of the blustering pleasures they are about to taste. Forthwith Briceval, who his uncle (who was immensely rich as we have before observed,) had also endowed on his part, gave his wife a carriage, servants, furniture of the newest fashion, and elegant dresses made in the first style. Jeannette, (shall we still make use of that name?) Madame Briceval, possessed the finest diamonds, every thing

she could wish, and it seemed as if her husband made it a point to anticipate her slightest wishes ; but this husband so generous, so great in all his actions, confined the proofs of his love within those limits ; he was always sad and melancholy ; and when his wife teased him about misanthropy, he sighed, rose up, and left the room. Jeannette soon perceived that her husband only entertained an esteem for her, and that even a very cool one : she communicated the afflicting remark to her mother ; you certainly dream, my dear child : I can perceive nothing of all this. Your husband behaves very well, and the little attentions he is paying to you incessantly, are, I think, sufficient proofs of his regard.

Jeannette believed her mother, and accommodated herself by little and little to the character of her husband, who

she found in all other respects always civil, delicate, and eager to please her.

Notwithstanding the rapid career of the revolution, the winter of that year was very agreeable, and offered a thousand varied pleasures. All these pleasures were new to Jeannette, and which she had never before enjoyed. The concerts of the Theatre Faydeau above all afforded her the most singular delight: she was not much of a musician, but she loved music; and, since her marriage she studied it with ardour. The celebrated Garat appeared to her to be the best of singers. Heavens! said she to her husband, what taste does that young man possess! and with what spirit he improves every thing that he sings! Madame W—no doubt has also talents; but she has not sufficient assurance in what she sings; her fresh and delicious voice trembles, and her

timidity seems to stifle all her powers.—It is a pity. Madame, replied Briceval; for it is hardly possible to possess a more affecting and a more melodious voice. If you wish to hear her, my dear love, I have the honour to know her; we will contrive a little concert, and you will find that in a saloon she will appear quite another person.

Madame Briceval was enchanted with the party proposed to her by her husband. A day was appointed. Briceval undertook the invitations, and a brilliant and numerous society embellishes his new fête for Jeannette. They pressed her to sing; she sung without farther entreaty, and a celebrated Italian composer accompanied her on the piano forte. Her graces, her talents, and her amiable character, totally engrossed the whole conversation.

of the company. Briceval remarked that his wife was the subject of the general attention, and his natural self love was flattered by it.

This charming evening was the prelude to others at the houses of the strangers whom they had invited, and Jeannette was thus launched into society. Balls succeeded, then invitations to drink tea, a new fashion adopted in France from the custom of their neighbours, and the winter glided away in this manner with Jeannette in entertainments and pleasures of all kinds. In every place she was, if not the youngest, at least the most amiable and the most agreeable. Her husband was fond of shining in the world; and Jeannette, who, like the rest of her sex, was no enemy to coquetry, availed herself of it without abusing it. Her mother accompanied her every where, and that

estimable woman enjoyed with heart-felt delight the praises which were lavished on her daughter.

In the mean time the preference yielded to Jeannette by the men, and in all the polite circles, excited the jealousy of the female sex. It was soon whispered that she was no great thing, a poor girl, very honestly brought up in the foundling hospital, and afterwards adopted through charity: they even spread the report that one of her uncles had merited a defamatory sentence for a crime which they exaggerated, and shortly after the poor Jeannette saw herself the object of malicious glances and Sardonic smiles. She learned the cause; and her reason, repressing her desires for the enjoyment of it, she suddenly renounced all company. It was then that the remembrance of Cecilia returned with increased bit-

terness : she had never ceased thinking on her ; she had even made some vague inquiries ; but, hurried along in the vortex of diversions, she had not been able, as she had projected, to occupy herself entirely in her friend's concern. She promised within herself not to neglect any thing that might tend to discover the least traces of her.

Briceval, on his part, always a prey to his gloomy melancholy, had given himself up to society only for the sake of his wife, for whom he possessed a great esteem and a sincere attachment. He was transported to see that, of her own accord, she withdrew her company from those palling and debauched circles into which at first she had heedlessly thrown herself. A melancholy piece of intelligence came, which still further strengthened their mutual taste for solitude. Their old uncle Ju-

lius, whom his gout had stopped all the winter in the house of his sister at Chartres, had lately died there. This circumstance, which afflicted Madame Dericourt much more than Briceval, recalled our friends back to Chartres. Briceval was sole heir to that uncle, who had brought him up; it was necessary for him to travel to several places in order to gather the fruits of his inheritance, and more especially make a voyage to America, where he possessed extensive plantations.

In consequence, Briceval, perceiving that the spring promised a very fine summer, resolved no longer to delay his voyage to the West Indies; a voyage which would keep him at least six months absent from home. Jeannette experienced a real chagrin on thinking that she must be separated so long from her husband: but, determined to pass

that fatal time in company with her mother, she placed a person to take care of her hotel in Paris, and followed Madame Dericourt, who was desirous to finish the remainder of her days in her house at Chartres. However, these two lonely and melancholy ladies were to have their society agreeably increased, and in a manner they were very far from expecting.

Some days before his departure, Briceval, who appeared more and more sad and full of care, disappeared without saying a word to any body, and did not return till the second morning after, to the great satisfaction of his wife, who had been very much disquieted by his absence.

Briceval descends from his carriage, and holds in his arms a young child, handsome as Cupid, at the most four years old. My dear wife, said he to

Jeannette, who had eagerly pressed forward to meet him, hitherto Heaven has not decreed whether you should be a mother, be so from this moment! Yes, deign to supply the place of a mother to this poor child, for whom I interest myself.....very much! I saw him born; I knew his mother, his unfortunate mother, whom he has lost for ever: Jeannette, if you will do a thing agreeable to your husband, it will be to bring up this child as your own: I promised his parents that I would never abandon him, to equal their tenderness for him! Alas! he will never know them!—Ah what, my love! replied Jeannette, this child is an orphan, and you condescend to be as a father to him! Why did you conceal it from me till now? Why did you not tell it me sooner?.....I could not, my dear. I was ignorant myself that this child might some day enter

my house. He received.....then.....the careffes of his father.—Who is apparently no more ? Was it a man in easy circumstances ?—An unfortunate—
—An indigent person whom you protected ?—That I loved.....as myself. In fine, Jeannette, let it suffice you to know that I am interested in it : take this infant ; may he soften the tedious hours of my absence, and may I at my return see you partaking the affection I have vowed for him ?—Make no doubt of it, my dear friend ! What a pretty little fellow he is ! What is his name ? Ha, ha....Yes, his name ? Is it in fact essential for you to know it.....His name is.....Augustus.—Augustus ! well, may he be as dear to me as to you ! What age ? four years old or thereabouts, is it not so ? That is the same age at which I was formerly received into the family of M. D'Eranville, by a bene-

factor equally generous and feeling. Let us render to this orphan, the same cares as were then lavished on my forlorn infancy : yes, let us now do for him what was formerly done for the poor Jeannette. My dear child ! I was in your condition, and like you I found a new family, and protectors. Be my child from this moment, and may never those whom Heaven may be pleased to send me make any alteration in the tenderness which I ought to shew you, till I see you settled in the world. My dear Briceval, this is quite a treat that you have given me.

Briceval looked at his wife with such a lively concern, that a tear fell from his eyelids. He then took hold of the hands of Jeannette, and squeezing them in his own, said to her, with a stifled tone of voice, you are a most excellent wife !.....

He embraced the little Augustus, bid adieu to his wife and his mother-in-law, and departed for his long voyage. Madame Briceval was at first afflicted at taking leave of her husband, whom she was going to lose for so long a time ; but soon, when she came to think that he would write to her often, and hasten his affairs, as he had promised her, she delivered herself entirely to the caresses which the child merited. She however asked Madame Dericourt if she had ever heard her nephew speak of this child and his family ? Never, replied her mother ; that was the first time I saw him or ever heard his name. If my brother was alive he could doubtless set us right in that point ; for as he accompanied his nephew every where, he must certainly have known his friends and connections. It is without

doubt the son of some domestic, of some indigent person whom he has relieved ; for your husband, my dear, has a most excellent heart ! Oh, the best of hearts !—He must nevertheless have been much interested for the parents of this child ; for he said so !.....He looked at Augustus with so tender an air !.... his heart beat violently, and I even remarked that his eyes were moistened with tears.—It was because those people were apparently very unfortunate !— I have heard my brother say, that your husband, even whilst they were travelling, went to succour the indigent even to their truckle beds, and into the lofts which they inhabited. Ah ! he is a man, and a man that you ought to be perfectly happy with, Jeannette, as you have complied with my desires in marrying such a gentleman ?—Quite happy, my dear mother, perfectly hap-

py! and Heaven has recompenced that docility which was due to you.

Jeannette clasped her mother to her bosom, and very soon these two friends turned all their attention to the child, who appeared timid and under constraint when in their presence: Augustus, said Jeannette to him, come hither?—My name is not Augustus said the child timidly, my name is Charles.—Hey! what is that he says, demands Jeannette of her mother?—Very well, replied Madame Dericourt, Augustus or Charles, it is indifferent which: in all likelihood he has two names, Charles Augustus. Tell me my little man, what was your papa's name?—My papa?....I have got no papa.—Yes, he is dead?—And your mama?—Nor a mama neither.—Poor orphan! Do you know their names?—*(The child makes no answer.)* He has

forgot them; perhaps they have been dead a long time. And who has had the care of you till the present time?—My nurse.—Where does she live?—(*The child is silent.*)—You put him questions, interrupted Jeannette, to which it is impossible he should answer at his tender age; is it possible we can remember? It is true, that at four years of age, myself, I remembered all that I saw at the hospital, even the names of my little comrades. Come, let me question him in my turn.

Jeannette took the child upon her knees: You know very well, is it not so, the gentleman that brought you here?—M. Briceval? he is my good friend.—Did you see him often?—Oh, very often: he always brought me something nice, and then he kissed me: Oh, I love him very well.—What, he used to go to your nurse's house?—Yes,

where there was a little mischevious boy, who was always pinching me, and the great dog bit me in going to take my-part: my friend, who was there, thought I was hurt, and he was taken ill.—He was.....taken ill?—Yes, he cried, saying I was dead: and that he had lost me! and I, I said, no my dear friend, I am not lost, here I am!

Jeannette blushed and grew pale successively. Her mother perceived her trouble. What ails you, my child?—Nothing, dear mother.....But it is because....Pardon me if I communicate to you a suspicion, which may be unfounded, that arises in my heart?—Speak?—This child, that he be my husband's?—Oh, no, interrupted the child, he is not my papa; for he has often forbid me to call him so.—Do you hear, dear mother?...—What folly, Jeannette! would your husband be

capable to present to you.....to introduce into your house.....Go, say no more about it. I have too much esteem for him to suppose him so very indelicate.

Madame Dericourt wished to prove to her daughter that she was in the wrong; but nothing could destroy such very natural suspicions, and Jeannette determined to keep them to herself.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A great Effect from a little Cause.

JEANNETTE being alone, reflected. My husband said she to herself is a worthy man, but he is an oddity. That man never related to me what he had been, what had happened to him before he married me: he has travelled a great deal with his uncle, and he has never spoken to me of his voyages. Not a single anecdote, not the least secret had come out of his mouth! His friends, his simple acquaintances, has he even told me the names of the men or women whom he had known before me?—Every time that I questioned

him concerning his former connections, he has kept the knowledge to himself, and turned the conversation upon other subjects, and I have not known any thing. He has always treated me with esteem, with regard : but has he ever loved me ?.... what I call loved.... with passion ? No. He appeared to me only to yield to a promise, to propriety, and not to the feelings of his heart. He is always gloomy, always melancholy. If he has loved another ! if this child.... What a misfortune that the weakness of his age hindered him from remembering the names of his parents, of the towns or villages where he had been brought up ! it seems as if he had known and seen only his nurse and M. Briceval, *his good friend*, who had forbidden him to call him *papa* !.... Oh men ! you accuse us of perfidy and dissimulation : has he not given a strong

instance of the like, by introducing his own son into my house, a child of illicit love! Be it so; I should much rather have preferred his telling me so: yes, I should have preferred his avowal of the whole circumstances: my dear Jeanette, before I knew you, before you had any claims upon my heart, upon my fidelity, I felt the power of love; hold, there is my child, his mother is no longer in existence; stand in her place, and be so generous as to suffer in your house an infant who is not your own!....If he had said so to me, I should have answered in embracing him: My dear friend, your confidence does me honour; it proves that you know how to do me justice: I cannot bear you any ill-will for a weakness that I could neither foresee, nor could have prevented: I adopt your son; let him become mine, and may my tenderness to-

wards him make you forget his mother, by transferring to me all the love she had inspired you with!....But I am composing a Romance! Oh Briceval!

Thus argued the poor Jeannette, who, for the first time, felt the power of jealousy. In that fatal passion the imagination is troubled, and Jeannette went so far as to fear that the mother of the child might be yet in existence, and was the mistress of her husband, and was even travelling along with him, whilst she, Jeannette, had the complaisance to take care of their child. However, this silly idea did not remain long in her head; a thousand wise reasons destroyed it, and Jeannette relied on the sole persuasion that the little Augustus was the son of M. Briceval.

This a little disturbed her tranquillity and ordinary gaiety; but nothing could diminish the tenderness which the

child by degrees inspired her with. He was so handsome, so amiable, so interesting !.....He had such droll little sayings !.....Jeannette and her mother finished by cockering and even spoiling him ; and he alone could console these two friends for the inquietude into which they were plunged by the absence of Briceval, which lasted for a whole year. He wrote to them twice during that lapse of time, and his last letter announced his approaching return ; but that return, which was delayed could not be very remote, and without doubt, Briceval, on the road, must return with the first opportunity.

In the mean while, an event happened which caused very great pleasure to the feeling Jeannette. Her friend Cecilia, whom she had not heard of for near two years, suddenly appeared again ; and this affecting discovery was brought about in the following manner :

We must recollect that the sister Emily, when she informed Jeannette, whom she met in the street, that her parents might be found again. gave her her own address, with that of the countryman Jacques: Jeannette, returned into the bosom of her family, had not failed to communicate her happiness to that friend of her infancy, and even send her succours: for this good woman lived by the labour of her hands, and her employment was not very lucrative. During her winter residence at Paris, Jeannette had often seen Emily, and had set her to work on her part to procure intelligence of the fate of the unfortunate Celicia, when unhappiness affected her. Emily had not succeeded any more than Madame Briceval; and the destiny of Cecilia remained always covered with the thickest veil.

One day Emily, who worked at embroidery, was ordered to go to the house of an unknown lady who had some work to give her. Emily goes, converses with the lady, takes the work which she offers her, and suddenly a person enters. Ah, my dear brother! are you there! well, what news?—It is terrible, my dear sister, always the same; this unfortunate woman! with haughtiness in her indigence, she absolutely refuses the assistance which you sent to her, she pretends that her labour is sufficient to maintain her, and that she works still! if she has work! but she has not any; the bone lace does not go on: they give her nothing to do.....—There is but one way left; that is to procure her some work, and to pay her a good price for it; that would not wound her delicacy. If, Madame, (*addressing himself to Emily,*)

you could render us that service amongst your acquaintances.—Sir, that does not lay in my way of business, I only embroider. It is for a most interesting woman, whom neither her birth nor fortune had destined to this dreadful state.—Alas, Sir! I knew an amiable lady like her, whom misfortunes have ruined, and compelled also to work for her bread; Mademoiselle D'Eranville; every body was acquainted with that name.....Mademoiselle D'Eranville! what do you say? That you know her? well, it is for herself that I speak to you.

Emily, remained mute with astonishment; then she exclaimed: For her! Is it her? Ah, good Heavens! oh, Sir! we have been searching for her a long time!—Who, Cecilia? you search for her!—Me, and her loving, her best friend Jeannette.—Jeannette also, you

see her sometimes? where is she? where is she?—But, Sir, pardon me: to whom have I the honour to speak?—You behold in me M. Verneuil, the intimate friend of Cecilia, of Jeannette; and this is my sister, Madame Dolmont, whom I have brought out of the country to Paris.

M. Verneuil put a thousand questions to Emily, to which she returned satisfactory answers. M. Verneuil exclaimed: Jeannette so rich, married in the bosom of her family? Quick, Labrie, a hackney coach; Mademoiselle Emily will be pleased to come along with us, to see Cecilia, and inform her of so many happy changes.

Emily consented to it: she gets into the carriage with Madame Dolmont and her brother, and they all three arrive at Cecilia's, who lived on the fourth story in the suburbs of Paris.

Emily recoiled two paces at seeing the change which misfortune had wrought in the features of her friend. Holy Virgin! ingenuously said this good woman; is that Madame D'Eranville I see there?—The same person: oh, it is you, my good Emily! do you bring me any news of Jeannette?—Yes, certainly, Mademoiselle, I have; and good news too.

Emily repeated to Cecilia all that she had told M. Verneuil. She added, that Jeannette, at present Madame Briceval, had never ceased to think on her friend, and that they had made a thousand fruitless inquiries; but where was you then employed? added Emily. —Ah, my dear! replied Cecilia, ask me rather where they had concealed me; I will relate you all the particulars: but Jeannette, that good friend, whom I had the ingratitude to accuse,

when shall I see her? We will set out immediately to see her, replied M. Verneuil: we must surprise her very agreeably. Let us not write to her; nor say any thing to her, and alight at her house at the instant when she the least expects it.—What, Sir! retorted Cecilia, would you have me to go to Madame Briceval in the state I am? to look as if I came to ask her!.....It is not your heart, Cecilia, that has dictated such injurious words against Jeanette; you know not that rare and most estimable woman; but to spare your delicacy, with your permission, my sister and myself will accompany you to Chartres; you shall not look like one fallen from the clouds; for that, without doubt, is what you apprehend. What o'clock is it? not yet twelve. We can set off by the post this evening; the days are long, and it is most

beautiful weather: come, let us go? ...Oh, Sir!....—Hey! what, you hesitate, Cecilia? do you possess sufficient insensibility to refuse going to embrace a friend?—Sir, do not my heart that injustice....but will misery and misfortune permit me to go and offer myself before the eyes of opulence!—If misfortune, Cecilia, had not soured your temper, I should have taken permission to blame this movement of so misplaced vanity; but I know your soul; it contradicts the haughtiness of your mind: you are made to partake and know the value of friendship, Cecilia; but if you are less happy, you know what reproaches we should make ourselves? Do not speak of that, Sir; I cannot accept the gifts which I have done nothing to merit; I may blush for a moment to stand in the presence of a friend, whom fortune has raised to the

summit of the car from which she has precipitated me ; but I feel myself great enough to go and partake her embraces, or despise her disdain, if her good fortune should have changed her character. Let us depart.—What misanthropy ! it is necessary to know you in order to excuse it.

M. Verneuil gave his orders for their departure, and he was heard to murmur in a low voice : She is married !... Another possesses that treasure ! poor Verneuil !....

This invaluable man sighed ; and Cecilia, who alone divined the motive of his emotion, forgetting that consolation she wanted herself, lavished it on her friend ; however, without letting him perceive that she had known, for a long time, his love for Jeannette. All is at last ready, and M. Verneuil, Madame Dolmont, Cecilia, as well as

the good Emily, mounted all four into a berlin, which suddenly flew towards the object of all their wishes.

Jeannette, Jeannette, what are you about at Chartres? Happiness is on the road; is not your heart agitated with a pleasing presentiment?.....

CHAPTER XXIX.

Are we near to the Catastrophe?

JEANNETTE was walking in the garden with her mother. The evening was cool and remarkably fine. The flowers drooping not long ago by the heat of the day grew strait again upon their stalks, refreshed by a gentle dew; they opened their calixes and perfumed the air with a thousand delicious odours. The moon, at full, reflected her face in the water of the canal, and the nightingale, perched on a tree in the grove, rejoiced nature with her melodious concerts. Jeannette was cheerful and tranquil; she

was talking with her mother concerning Briceval's approaching return, who was expected every day; and the two friends did not think of enjoying that sleep to which the little Augustus had been delivered for several hours, when they heard the dog bark in the fore court. What is that! said Madame Dericourt; they ring at the street door: at this hour, who comes to visit us? The gardener does not go to open it; he is gone to bed; but his old wife is yet....—Oh, they open it: let us go and see.... but who comes running towards us so fast?....

In the garden! exclaimed a voice: I'll go!...Madame, Madame? Madame Briceval?—Here I am: who is it?—It is Emily, it is me: come then: good news: I bring you a numerous company.—Who are they?—Cecilia, your friend: Cecilia, whom I have

found again!—Is it possible? where is she?—There; behold her.

Cecilia in fact had followed Emily, whom they had sent forwards gently to forewarn Jeannette, but which she had done bluntly enough, as we have already seen. Cecilia and Jeannette are mutually clasped in each other's arms; their faces, their hands are inundated with tears of sensibility: they are unable to speak; they clasp each other still closer; and Madame Dericourt was obliged to receive Madame Dolmont and her brother, whom Jeannette has not had time to remark. O my friend, it is you! it is you! And this was all that Cecilia and Jeannette could say to be understood, and they were clasped so strongly together, that they were obliged to separate them, for fear their health should suffer from that affecting expansion of

their hearts. Jeannette then perceived M. Verneuil with a lady that was unknown to her. Jeannette saluted them affectionately ; but returned to Cecilia, and these two friends walked with their arms round each other till they reached the saloon, into which Madame Dericourt caused the company to enter.

Jeannette put a thousand questions to Cecilia, who, without answering her, interrogated her in turn. A truce with questions for this evening, cried Madame Dericourt ; a truce with explanations, my dear daughter ; let us think of giving these ladies something for supper, and send them to bed ; for they have been travelling.

The prohibition of Madame Dericourt is with difficulty observed ; but that good mother purposely turned the conversation upon general subjects, and

they no longer discourse upon the happiness of their meeting again. It was decided that next morning at breakfast they should each of them relate their adventures, and supper was served up. Mademoiselle D'Eranville, said Madame Dericourt, what infinite obligations am I not under to you and your generous family, for having preserved my child for me! what a very happy day is this to me, in which I see you, on which I embrace the benefactress of my child!—Oh! Madame, do not speak of benefits, the heart of Jeannette merits friends that are more happy. Can you yet think on misfortune, interrupted Jeannette, when we meet each other again, Mademoiselle? what more misfortunes can attack us? I defy barbarous fortune to persecute you again.—Madame, replied Cecilia in a low voice, you alone know what

will be always wanting to my wishes !
 I understand, I understand : never any
 news of the father, nor of the son !—
 None, Madame, but, pardon me ; let
 us leave my secret grief, and let us
 only think on the pleasure I experience
 in seeing you again.—Mademoiselle,
 one thing nevertheless troubles that
 pleasure.....not on my side at least.....
 formerly you had the goodness to be
 plain with me ; I was your good *Jean-*
nette....—Has Madame Briceval lost
 her rights to that affecting language ?
 Madame....the times are very much
 changed !—But our hearts are not :
 speak to me then as formerly. I shall
 lose too much by my change of situa-
 tion !—Suffer me, my friend ; what I
 owe to you as well as to myself, you
 will disoblige me to insist any more.—
 Call me then at least your dear Jean-

nette!—Well, be it so, my dear Jeanette! Oh! what obligations have we both to that kind Emily, and to this worthy friend who brought us all away from Paris, without giving us time to breathe.—M. Verneuil leaves no bounds to my acknowledgements.—Ah, Madame, answered Verneuil sighing..... but where is your husband?—My husband has been absent about a year: but I expect him every day. He will be very happy to see you.—Madame!...

M. Verneuil sighed again, and Cecilia comprehended that the sight of M. Briceval was the thing he was the least desirous of. The remainder of the evening passed in pleasing discourse; and each went to enjoy the sleep that was so necessary after their long bodily fatigues, and the commotions which the heart had sustained in the journey.

Next morning, Jeannette, who had caused Cecilia to sleep near to her in her own chamber, observed that she did not sleep. You have not had a good night's rest, my friend, said she to her with chagrin. Very little; I know not why the image of Saint Ange has troubled my sleep during the whole of this night.—So there is no hope of meeting this dear lover?—Ah, Jeannette! perhaps he no longer exists; but my son, who shall restore him to me?—Mademoiselle, the turns of chance are so singular; so inexplicable! For instance, I despaired of the pleasure of ever seeing you again, and a single day has sufficed to restore you to my love. Hope, Mademoiselle; I have an idea that Saint Ange will be restored to you.

Jeannette did not believe she could

read so well into the future, as we shall see in the sequel.

Cecilia and her friend descended into the saloon, where the rest of the company were already assembled. They breakfasted ; then Jeannette related all that had happened to her since her separation from Cecilia. The circumstances of her marriage with M. Briceval very much affected M. Verneuil, and Cecilia easily perceived his trouble. They were then desirous to hear the history of Cecilia, and to know why all the search that Jeannette had made after her, had proved fruitless. Cecilia whom the remembrance of her misfortunes afflicted too sensibly, desired M. Verneuil to undertake that task, which he accepted ; but Cecilia during that mournful recital went to walk in the garden with Emily, whose curiosity was a little disappointed by that prome-

nade, that left M. Verneuil at liberty to speak of Cecilia without reserve, which he did in the following words.

“ The very day of your departure from Paris, Madame Briceval, one of my friends offered me the opportunity of a carriage to go into Britany, where I wanted to claim, according to our new laws, the property which had been divided among my brothers to my detriment. I went then about two o'clock in the afternoon, to take leave of Mademoiselle D'Eranville, whom I found bathed in tears. It was your separation in the morning that caused them to flow. I assured her of my regret which I felt at abandoning her in my turn at so critical a moment, and I departed. The same evening, Madame Aubry, the owner of the house, went up stairs to her quite frightened; Ah, my dear child! said she to her, save yourself;

they are looking for you—Who, me?—You, Mademoiselle Dascourt; I am sure it is for you.—They are mistaken, I have done nothing that could possibly expose me.....Then you will not save yourself, you are in the wrong: for here they are.

“ In fact, the officers of justice crowded in. An officer shewed Cecilia his order to arrest her; and in spite of the cries, and groans of that unfortunate woman, they had the cruelty to tear her from the arms of her affrighted hostess. They put her into a coach, and she travelled without knowing where she was going. She passed thus four days and four nights on the road, without taking any other nourishment than a little of the gross aliments which they offered her as to a criminal: and arrived at last at the town of Rennes, where they plunged her into a close

prison, without letting her know the crimes laid to her charge. They interrogate her: and the crime of which they accuse her is so new to her eyes, that she sees clearly that she is a prisoner only on account of the name of Dascourt, which she had assumed. A woman named Dascourt was compromised in an extensive conspiracy, they believed that she was concealed in Paris, and the familiarity of name had been the cause of Cecilia's misfortune. You may readily conceive that she had no trouble in proving that she was not that great culprit which they thought they had hold of; but it was necessary for her to declare her real name, and that appeared suspicious. Why had she changed her name? and what was her motive? In vain Cecilia excused herself, by the lustre of her former brilliant name, a lustre which her indigence would tar-

nish, and the necessity of working for the public ; that did not appear to be satisfactory, and it was no longer as a conspiratrix, but as a suspected person, that the poor Cecilia was imprisoned again. She remained there near a year, unhappy, closely confined, and without being able to correspond with any person whatsoever. I shall pass over the details of her sufferings in her melancholy prison, to come to her departure from that horrid place. I was then, myself, in the environs of Rennes, occupied with my personal affairs, when chance conducted me into the place where your friend was groaning. I went there to see one of my friends who has since been acknowledged innocent. I heard talk of Mademoiselle D'Eranville; I inform myself on the subject: I learn that, this invaluable lady is de-

tained: I run, I intercede, and I at last obtain her liberty. You will permit me to abridge the recital of the trivial services that I was then so happy as to render her.....What ! said I to her when she was at my sister's house, at Madame Dolmont's, whom you see here present, is it possible, Mademoiselle, that you have been the victim to the similarity of a name? I have often heard talk of the prosecution against that woman Dascourt ; and it was you that they mistook for that monster? Alas ! if I had known it sooner ! but in fine we possess you : you are here, and I hope that you will never quit us more !—And Jeannette, said that feeling woman to me, (for that was the first word she uttered,) and Jeannette, sir, have they heard any news of her? On the remembrance of that friend, I de-

terminated them all to come and trouble you ; and if we determined to take you by surprize, if we have taken so many liberties, it is to me alone you ought to direct your reproaches !.....”

CHAPTER XXX.

Good news which will not be confirmed.

M. Verneuil ceased speaking; and Jeannette after having thanked him for the flattering things concerning her which he had placed in his recital, admired, as well as her mother, Cecilia's noble stateliness of character, who would owe nothing to generosity, all to labour. Jeannette, who was better acquainted than any other person with the heart of her friend, explained her conduct, in hazarding even some reflections not very agreeable to M. Verneuil. Besides sir, said she to him, can a young woman be blamed, who by herself, with-

out a husband, without relations, might draw upon herself the shafts of calumny, by receiving favours from an ancient ecclesiastic, a bachelor, and apt to inspire esteem ? The world is censorious ! what have we not heard said concerning your visits at our house when we lived with Madame Aubry ! That Madame Aubry herself was the first gazette that communicated to every body her conjectures on our manner of living, and you always stood for something in these flourishes of her tongue. I agree that, at Madame Dolmont's house, the abode of a young woman was sanctioned by decorum ; but you, sir, also resided there, and nothing could prevent calumny and malice from tarnishing the reputation of Madame D'Eranville..... For the rest, my rare and valuable friend, I very sincerely thank you for what you have done for Cecilia up to

the present time, you deserve the esteem of every honest man, and I cannot find terms sufficient to express my gratitude. At present that Cecilia is here permit me to finish your work : deign also to assist me in engaging her to live with me, with my mother and my husband. I dare believe she will not refuse me ; but, if you join your solicitations to mine, I am more sure to obtain that favour from her.

M. Verneuil and his sister promised Jeannette to second her in her laudable project. Cecilia came back with Emily, and knowing that all her friends had learned her humiliating detention, she blushed without daring to lift her eyes to Jeannette. The latter, who guessed the secret motive of her shame, was eager to divert her from her doleful ideas : she complimented her on her attachment for M. Verneuil, who, add-

ed she, is the most valuable man that I know !.....

This speech gave M. Verneuil a secret pleasure ; but he resumed his grief when he reflected that Jeannette was married, and that he had lost all hope of ever being happy.

That feeling man had unveiled his heart to his sister. The worthy Madame Dolmont, jealous of her brother's peace of mind, engaged him to fly from a house, where every thing nourished his hopeless love. In consequence, to have a decent pretext for departing, M. Verneuil, feigning to enter into Jeannette's views, announced, the same evening at supper, that the next morning he should return to Paris with Madame Dolmont. I have quitted all, added he, recoveries, law-suits, the devil, that occupied me every day in that city, where I have not

a moment to yield to my pleasures. My affairs may suffer by too long an absence : Mademoiselle D'Eranville's presence will soon make you forget my absence.—But replied Cecilia, a little disturbed, I thought my friend, that you would have given me a place in the carriage to return to Paris ?

Jeannette took Cecilia by the hand : Mademoiselle, said she to her with an affecting and tender tone of voice, I will only recall to your remembrance a saying of your own ; after that, you may quit me if you have the heart to do it ! that speech which you made to me before our separation : *Jeannette, my good Jeannette, it was thus that you expressed yourself, I esteem friendship too much to blush in partaking its fortune. (Jeannette had altered a few words ; for Cecilia had said, to blush at its benefactions.)* Depart, Mademoiselle, depart at pre-

sent, if you do not understand me.

Cecilia remained confounded: her mistrust and her misanthropy would then have dictated her answer; but her heart silenced those two melancholy counsellors, and she only answered Jeannette by throwing her two arms around her neck, and hiding her face in her bosom. I understand you, said Jeannette! you stay with me, with my mother, my kind mother, who, from this moment, will believe she possesses two affectionate daughters, equally inclined to love her and respect her!—Jeannette, I did not say that.—No; but I say it for you. Will you, M. Verneuil, when you return to Paris, discharge Mademoiselle D'Eranville's lodgings: (smiling) you will very readily give him your letter of attorney for that purpose, is it not so, my dear friend?—But Jeannette!.....—No more buts, a

bold yes, is what I ask of you.—Well, Jeannette, my dear Jeannette, lead me as you please. Yes, I will stay with you; I honour myself with your friendship, *with your benefactions*; and this victory which you obtain over my.... delicacy, is a sure warrant to you of my love for you!

M. Verneuil and Madame Dolmont congratulated Cecilia on her determination, and Madame Dericourt thanked her for it with a feeling grace. The next morning M. Verneuil departed with his sister, Emily and Cecilia were definitively to remain near Jeannette. The only inquietude of Cecilia was to know how M. Briceval would approve of her residing in his house: she did not know him; and although Jeannette assured her that her husband was a very worthy man, and complaisant to his wife, Cecilia very reasonably doubted

whether the husband would partake the excess of tenderness that the wife had for her. However, she cheered up again from that vain terror, when Madame Dericourt repeated to her the same praises that Jeannette had bestowed on Briceval. Cecilia, happy and tranquil as much as she could be at a distance from Saint Ange, delivered herself entirely to the effusions of the two excellent beings who had admitted her into their house, and she endeavoured to render herself useful to them by all little attentions, and some light works agreeable to her sex. See then, said she to her friend, see, Jeannette, the caprice of fortune? See me here in your house precisely in the same situation as you was at my father's! How things change!—Mademoiselle has said a thing that affects me much! Can Mademoiselle possibly consider herself in the

situation in which I was placed, at M. D'Eranville's, a poor orphan, brought up by charity ? My friend should think herself equally mistress in this house as myself.—Yes, my dear friend ; but there is a master, whom I have not yet seen, who may, with reason, think my claims very ridiculous.—Mademoiselle should wait till she knows him, before she forms a judgement !—But, Jeannette, you have not told me who that handsome child is whom I have caressed so much since I have been here ? It cannot be your son ; for he appears to be four years old, and you have only been married about two years ?—This child !..(Jeannette turned pale) is a young orphan that my husband recommended to me before his departure. He takes a lively interest in him.—Lovely child ! I know not why his countenance excites an uneasiness in me ?.....He recalls my

own son to my mind, who should be of the same age !

Cecilia sighed : Jeannette also sighed, but from a very different motive. Cecilia thought of her lover ; Jeannette was jealous, and thought on the small degree of delicacy she supposed her husband could possess, who had introduced to her the child of love or lewdness. These two persons remained some time thoughtful. Madame Dericourt came to divert them from their melancholy, and serenity once more appeared on their brows.

A month elapsed without Briceval appearing again. Jeannette was excessively uneasy at it, and Cecilia dreaded the arrival of that stranger, from whom she apprehended a cold reception and astonishment. Cecilia was more tranquil at not seeing him arrive ; but how many cares did she cost the delicacy of

Jeannette ! what trouble had she to compel her to accept objects even of the first necessity. What round-about ways did she take to get her to accept some fashionable dresses, and some trifling jewels of which Jeannette feigned she wanted to get rid, to engage her to receive them ! It was Jeannette's whole study, and she really stood in need of all her courage, all the constancy of friendship, to seek every day for new means to oblige her friend, without alarming her misanthropy, without wounding her delicacy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

*In which the intelligent Reader learns
nothing.*

AT last the day so much wished for by Jeannette, and so much dreaded by Cecilia, governed by fatal presentiments, that day which was to bring back M. Briceval, arrived, to destroy the happiness of every body. A messenger arrived early in the morning at Jeannette's house; he has ten leagues the start of her husband: he has brought a letter, in which that eager husband assures his wife that he will come to dine with her. He has terminated his affairs happily; that he is

worth almost a million, always tender, constant, and burning with desire to embrace his wife, his mother-in-law, and the *little Augustus* who must needs be much altered in a year.

The attention of Briceval for the *little Augustus* was not the most flattering to Madame Briceval; but, in fine, she is going to see her husband once more: his letter is tender, and full of passion: what joy for Jeannette! She and her mother hastened to inform Cecilia of this news; who grew pale, without knowing from what cause she was so much troubled. Jeannette rallied her upon it: Cecilia excused herself, by saying she was indisposed; and intreated her friend to permit her to keep her apartment all day.—I do not understand that, Mademoiselle, replied Jeannette with a smile: I guess your thoughts; you always are in fear that

my husband does not possess a heart like mine own, and you dread him as we dread a severe and disobliging stranger. Cheer up again, once more, Mademoiselle; Briceval would not be worthy of my love, if his character differed from mine. If I love that husband, it is because he has the same love for me, and the virtues we reflect on together we practise together. My dear friend, you had better appear at dinner amongst us, and not trouble, by the vexation of your absence, the pleasure that a family which loves you is about to taste in seeing the master of it once more!

Cecilia knew that her conduct would in fact not be civil, if she hid herself: she reflected that sooner or later she must necessarily see this M. Briceval, and she resolved within herself not to put off the moment. My dear friend,

said she to Jeannette, I will do whatever you please; but you will permit me in your turn to remain in my apartment until you have forewarned your husband of my indiscretion in taking up my abode in his house; after which you will take the trouble to fetch me; we will then go down together, and then you will present me to that man who has engaged before hand all my esteem.

Jeannette consented to that arrangement; she descended to give orders to prepare a little entertainment for her husband. A superb repast, nosegays presented by groups of young herdsmen, fire-works too, as well as dances and illuminations, all are prepared; and the street and the ward, and even the city, informed of M. Briceval's return, proposed to contribute to the fête which his wife was about to give him.

Jeannette is every where: it is she that places the garland of flowers and the small lamps in her garden; transparencies, cyphers, and inscriptions are every where to be seen: in a word, M. Briceval will be astonished when he enters his own house. Oh, yes, he will be very much surprized!...but in what manner? Let us proceed.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, cries of joy are heard in the street of the Visitation, which is full of people; the postillion's whip announces the arrival of the post chaise. It enters into the court: applauses, *long lives* are shouted on all sides; and, Briceval descends from the carriage into the arms of his wife and mother-in-law. The little Augustus, dressed like Cupid, presents him a double heart in flame, on which is inscribed:

Cupid and Hymen have re-united them!

Briceval was enchanted with this device; and it might be perceived that the disguise of Augustus aroused more than one idea, and recalled more than one tender remembrance !....

In fine, Briceval in his own house, feasted, praised, embraced: he has made a fortunate voyage; he sees again his household goods; he is at the utmost height of frantic joy. Madame Dericourt communicated to him the happiness that Jeannette had enjoyed in finding Madame D'Eranville again, who she very much wished should take up her abode with them. That is right, very right, my dear mother, replied Briceval; but where is she, this interesting woman whom I have never seen, but whose parents were the friends of my unfortunate father! I myself in my infancy, was received into the house of her father, and it was there Jean-

nette where you called me your *little husband*, without conjecturing that one day I should become your great and real husband. How kindly I take it, Madame, that you have offered a friendly asylum to that unfortunate lady of whom my wife has so often spoken to me! But where is she? why is she not partaker in the general joy. She does my heart an injury to think it less feeling than that of her friend Jeannette? Oh deign to present to me that inestimable daughter of your generous benefactors, my dear Jeannette! I entreat you would.—My dear Briceval, replied Jeannette, I had guessed your sentiments towards her: I run to find her.

Jeannette in fact flew to the apartment of Cecilia, and, during that time, Madame Dericourt caused her son-in-law to seat himself at table. She places

herself by his side, and some neighbours and friends whom they had invited also sat down, reserving two places for Madame Briceval and her friend.

Madame Briceval appeared, accompanied by Cecilia, who, confused and trembling, did not dare to lift her eyes from the ground to look at the master of the house.... Briceval rises, runs to Cecilia: Mademoiselle, said he, deign—Heavens! who do I see?—Cecilia lifts her eyes, and exclaims: Saint Ange! Oh! oh! unhappy woman!....—and faints away.....

Here the pen, too feeble to express the effect produced by their exclamation, drops from the hand, and it is a description which must be left to the judgement of the reader.

Briceval with his hands before his face, leaned against the wainscot.

Madame Dericourt not knowing the meaning of all this, ran to Cécilia, who is deprived of all motion, and who, Jeannette, too much affected herself, has not the strength to support. The poor Jeannette is also ready to fall in a swoon, and all the assembly remain mute, in the attitude of persons who wait an explanation.

The dumb scene is prolonged; and Madame Dericourt, not being able to recall Cécilia to her senses, took the resolution to have her carried to her apartment, recommending her to the care of the good Theresa. As to Jeannette, she remained for a long time confounded: she did not dare then to interrogate her husband: but she reflected; and, born resolute and enterprising, she immediately came to a decision. Sir, said she quietly to her husband, let not this singular event,

which, was without doubt unexpected, but natural enough, disturb the pleasure of this happy day. Come and sit down at table.—Madame, permit me to retire to my chamber.—Sir, I conceive your surprise; but I swear to you it cannot equal mine: but, in fine, I hope your wife will not suffer by a meeting which she was very far from expecting.—Madame, where is Mademoiselle Saint Brice?—Mademoiselle Saint Brice, Sir, is not the name of my friend: she is called Cecilia D'Eranville. Saint Brice is a fictitious name which her father assumed in his travels; but these details would be misplaced at this instant. Will you, Sir, be pleased to attend to the little entertainment which your wife had prepared against your return, and not give her the vexation to see her hope deceived and the quiet of her house disturbed for a rival! ...

CHAPTER XXXII.

Jeannette appears in a new Character.

BRICEVAL, recovered from his first astonishment, looked at Jeannette: he could not conceive it was her that spoke, and that spoke thus of her friend; to whom she had so many obligations, on whom she made the greatest eulogies. He was awed by her cold and positive tone. He addressed himself to Madame Dericourt: my dear mother, what is become of Mademoiselle D'Eranville? my dear friend, she is in her own chamber; where she can receive the necessary assistance her fainting requires.—Her unfortunate

swoon !....Cruel uncle ! O that she no longer existed.....Thou didst persuade me !

Jeannette is pale ; she may be perceived to suffer ; but she refrains herself ; and, seating herself at table, she strives to make the guests smile, saying to them : Come, gentlemen, let not this hinder us from making M. Briceval welcome : he is going himself to preside at this table : oh, he esteems his wife and his friends too much to separate himself from their society the day of his return !

Briceval looked steadfastly at Jeannette, made some paces towards the door ; then, returning, he sat down near his wife, and contented himself with saying to Madame Dericourt : Dear mother ! let them take proper care of her !—Do not be uneasy about

it, son; in a moment I shall myself go up to her apartment.

The repast was a melancholy one, as may be readily imagined: the strangers invited ate by themselves, whispered in each other's ear, or fixed their eyes upon the owners of the mansion all dinner time. Jeannette affected tranquillity and even gaiety; she paid the greatest attention to the little Augustus, of whom she now knew the parents; afterwards she had the resolution to preside at the illuminations, and even at the fire-works, at which she forced her husband to be present.

How afflicted was that civil and delicate husband!.....farther on, we shall know him better.

When all the company had retired, Jeannette would have gone up to her friend's apartment; but Madame Deri-

court opposed it. Why so, dear mother? said she aloud before Briceval; my husband and myself wish to go up together to inquire after her health. —My dear daughter that cannot be. I was desirous of concealing it from you as long as that rout was tiring us here, but now it is gone. —How gone, my dear mother! what the crowd? —Oh, no, Mademoiselle D'Eranville! when she came to herself, she did nothing but weep and moan, then she sent for a coach; and after having thanked me for what she called our bounty towards her, she availed herself of the embarrassment in which you both were to withdraw herself from your view, and set off for Paris. —My dear mother! and you have permitted that sick weak sufferer!.... —I did all in my power to retain her; I could not prevail on her to stop. —But I should have been in-

formed of it?—What would you have? I saw you presiding at the entertainment; and besides for my part....all that is an enigma to me: do I know what made her swoon, and seemed to electrify you all?—And she wept?—Without doubt she wept, she groaned: she muttered between her teeth: *Alas! my friend is her husband! I will not betray friendship! I will depart, and never shall they see me more.*—Poor Cecilia, she instructs me in my duty!

Jeannette let herself fall into an elbow chair, with her hands upon her eyes, from which some tears slid down. Briceval, pale and confused, let these words escape, which roused Jeannette from her reverie. She is gone!....she has done right, yes, yes, she has done right!——Done right, Sir, exclaimed Jeannette, rising, and with a tone of indignation! do you not love her any

longer?—Madame, I ought now...but you know then!—All, Sir: I know that you have basely taken advantage of her sleep at the perfidious Linval's; I know, in a word, that this child, this pretended Augustus, is her son and yours.—Madame!.....who could have informed you?—Herself: Cecilia, before I knew you, had related the whole to me; but the change of both your names, your reserve with me, all has put me on a wrong scent. If I had known that you had borne the name of Saint Ange, I should have been enlightened, and you would not have had the trouble to take so many bye ways to introduce your child into my house.—Madame, pardon me; it is true, that I adored Cecilia, whom I only knew under the name of Saint Brice: I feel, yes, I feel that I still love her!—I am sorry for it, Sir; but I am your wife.—

I know it, Madame.... but, that dear Cécilia!....I am your wife, you say to me!—Good Heavens, Madame, do you think me capable of forgetting it, of failing in the duties that marriage imposes upon me?—At least, Sir, should you not think a divorce very convenient that you might resume your former chains!—That ironical tone surprises me, Madame; you have not hitherto accustomed me to it? Do you not know that I abhor a divorce, and I regard that means of breaking the marriage ties as unworthy of a gentleman? neither, Madame, have you given me cause to come to that dishonourable extremity?—I do not believe it, Sir. Moreover, let us lay all that aside: your mistress is no longer in my house; she felt that she could no longer remain near your wife; I am charmed that she has taken that resolu-

tion, which proves the purity of her soul; for, at bottom she is a most inestimable woman.—Oh, most inestimable, and the more so in my eyes: since that I know who she is, and what care she and her parents have taken of your youth.—I shall never forget them, those generous cares; but truly (*forcing a smile*) my gratitude ought not to extend so far, as to yield up my husband to her. That dear husband is too valuable in my eyes, that I should make him the sacrifice.—Ah! (*ironically*) you are very good!—Oh, more than you think for!

The wedded pair separated: and that night, which ought to have offered them so many enjoyments after so long a separation, that melancholy night saw them separately seeking that repose which neither of them could enjoy.

Before going to her chamber, Jean-

nette had informed her mother of the whole connection between Briceval and Cecilia, and the good lady, quite astonished, had sworn to her daughter that her brother had never said a word about the matter. Jeannette, overwhelmed with astonishment and grief, could not sleep; and, however surprising her conduct may appear, she strengthened herself in the design which she had projected.

Reader, you are going perhaps to fall out with my Jeannette? I am afraid of it: I am nevertheless her historian, I ought not to pass over any thing concerning her.....but deign to have patience, you shall judge in the sequel.

Bernard, the husband of Theresa, was an intelligent man, and of approved discretion. At day break, Madame Briceval caused that worthy servant to mount on horseback, and ordered him

to go secretly, without waiting to bait on the road, to Paris, to take a letter to M. Verneuil, whose address she had happily retained. In that letter, Jeanette informed that common friend of all that had passed: she informed him of the connections of her husband with Cecilia, and entreated him to detain Mademoiselle D'Eranville, till she had seen her, if yet she had taken refuge at his house; she further engaged him to send her an answer by the same courier.

Bernard being departed, Jeannette descended into the garden, where she perceived her husband, who had got thither before her: she approached him mildly. My dear, you have had a bad night's rest?—A very bad one, madame.—You may very well feel that my sleep must also be very troubled?—Wrongfully, Madame; for, in short, in

what can all that affect you? I had not the advantage to know you when I saw and loved Mademoiselle D'Eranville. I find her again, well ...it is a stroke of fate that cannot alter your position; for I am married, am an honest man, and what is more, I love you, I esteem you too much to maintain any connection with another, even should I...burn always for her! you spoke to me yesterday of a divorce! Oh, how distant is that from my thoughts! I, I am the cause of your woe! Jeanette, you cannot think me capable of being so? It is not me be assured, that they will see come to that extremity: it is so much abused, that it is dishonourable. Alas then, what have you done to me, inestimable and tender woman? You prepared me an entertainment, I arrive! ...and you discover in your house a rival and my son!.....

Alas! it is that, Jeannette, which affects me even to tears! you do not merit such a chagrin!—Sir, so much candour and manly tenderness calms the chagrin which I ought doubtless to feel; but deign to inform me how you could contract new ties, loving always the woman by whom you had a child? for your last letter that I saw,—pardon me; but do you recollect one evening a Madame Saint Albin sent you for some lace? It was to Cecilia's lodgings that you came: she was not at home; it was myself that received you. How, Jeannette! was it you? It was near night, and I scarcely noticed you; but in fact, when I perceived you here, your figure did not appear to me to be altogether unknown: but could I think?....It was there then that I lost the foul copy of a letter which I had begun to my

uncle. I looked for it a long time: but then I no longer bore the name of Saint Ange; and if you had asked Madame Saint Albin, she would have told you.... What she did also tell me, that the person she had sent to us, was not named Saint Ange.—She only knew me by the name of Briceval, which we had the happiness to reinstate in all its honours. That name had been stained by an infamous judgement which the Dericourts had obtained against my father. My uncle Julius, commander of the Order of Malta before the revolution, caused himself to be called Mellery and me Saint Ange. He discovered my love for the pretended Saint Brice; by the treachery of my faithless servant. That furious old man threatened me with his malediction and disinherison, if I had the audacity to engage my faith before I should have discovered the

daughter of Felix Dericourt, whom I ought to wed: I had promised it to my dying father; he always placed that before my eyes. The old man was violent; I was in fear of him, he kept me in awe of him! Under the impossibility of giving my hand to her that I loved, I dared to rob her of her child and mine, whom I placed with a nurse that was devoted to me. It was thus that, travelling always with my uncle, I caused, unknown to him, my son to be brought up; but that mischievous uncle, willing to root out love at once from my heart, read to me a forged letter (at present I perceive it,) from Madame Servol, from Calais. That friend informed me that Mademoiselle Saint Brice had died at Paris. You may judge of my grief! I might have taken it into my head to have gone to Calais, to Madame Servol, to

receive fuller information concerning this misfortune, if we had not learnt, some time after, that Madame Servol herself as well as her husband had been plunged into the tomb by a contagious disorder. From that time I believed my misfortune certain; and it was only in that conviction, Jeannette, that I consented to obey my uncle, your mother, and the manes of my father, by marrying you! As long as my uncle lived, I concealed my son at the nurse's house; but after the death of my uncle, I could not resist the desire to bring up near to me that child of a woman whom I thought was no longer in existence: behold, Jeannette, the exact truth. Your mother herself was ignorant of the secrets which I have confided to you; my uncle was too fearful that she would refuse me your hand, if that virtuous woman had known that I

loved another, by whom I had a child of love. He never spoke to her concerning it; but you perceive by my confidence, Jeannette that your husband esteems you, ought to, and will love you, and constantly seek your happiness!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

*Alas! Jeannette appears no longer
amiable!*

Briceval sighed as he concluded these words, and Jeannette perceived that the love with which he flattered her, was only the resignation of a virtuous man, who thinks that he ought not to let his wife suffer from the caprices of fortune. Jeannette did all in her power to engage him to comfort himself for the loss of a woman that he adored; and what very much surprised Briceval, she had the imprudence to encrease his regret, by drawing a most seducing picture of the virtues and charms of

Cecilia. Do not speak to me any longer about it, Madame, said he; you plead her cause more than your own.

He rose up, entered another walk of the garden and disappeared.

At dinner, which was not more cheerful than the day before, Jeannette announced that she had formed the project of going to settle in Paris. She desired her husband to accompany her thither; and Briceval, who was not accustomed to refuse the smallest trifle to his wife, consented to it, without reflecting on the dangers which that residence might expose him to. Madame Dericourt was the only person affected by this plan: she liked her house, the town of Chartres, and quiet, and determined to remain there. Jeannette urged her departure, and it was agreed that Jeannette should go with her husband to pass some months at

Paris, that afterwards both of them should return to live with their mother. Indeed, this desire of Jeannette had much the appearance of caprice; but we are going to see her commit much greater follies.

Bernard secretly reported to Jeannette the answer of M. Verneuil. That in effect Cecilia had come to his house all in tears; that she had related to him, as well as his sister, her tender adventure with one named Saint Ange, and the most singular of all was that this Saint Ange and M. Briceval formed but one person; moreover, Cecilia made vows for the happiness of her friend; she was in despair at the fatal ray of light which, against her will, she had let into the mind of Jeannette; she swore never more to see Briceval again, but she regretted her son, who, without doubt, was that handsome

child whom she had seen at her friend's house. M. Verneuil concluded by promising the secrecy required, and above all to detain Cecilia, as Jeannette had recommended him.

This letter fulfilled the wishes of Madame Briceval. She urged again their departure; and some days afterwards, she embraced her mother, who was not very well pleased with that abrupt leaving of her, and got into the carriage with her husband.

Behold her again settled in her hotel in the suburb of Saint Germain: and what strangely surprised Briceval was, that this woman so wise, so orderly, and so philosophic during her residence in the province, engaged a great number of lackies, carriages of every description, and made a scandalous shew. She had attached Bernard to her suite, whom she had brought with her to

Paris; she had need of this domestic, of whose fidelity she was certain.

The second day of her arrival, she went with Bernard to the house of M. Verneuil; where they did not expect her; and Cecilia, who but little foresaw that visit, was there near to Madame Dolmont. Cecilia cried out when she recognized Jeannette, not that she was jealous, that she had a grudge against her; but by an effect of shame, of grief, and surprise. What ails you, Mademoiselle? said Jeannette timidly to her; is it my appearance that causes you so great fear? Jeannette would be very unhappy if that was the case!—Madame, can you presume?—I have lost your friendship, I see it, and swear to you, that perhaps I never deserved it better than at this moment.—Jeannette, I can neither bear you a grudge nor hate you: attri-

bute my surprise then only to the emotion I felt at seeing you. You are very happy; you are Madame Briceval!...—Alas, it is true, Mademoiselle, that I am the wife of a man who was very dear to you! but if he appeared worthy of your love, judge how much he merits mine! I love him, I adore him; oh, I avow it....and I shall die, if ever I must behold myself separated from him!....

Jeannette looked steadfastly at Cecilia. Cecilia is overcome, tears seem to escape from her eyelids. Madame Dolmont looks at her brother, as much as to say: *She has made a very indiscreet confession to her rival; she should husband her sensibility a little better.*

Jeannette remarked all, and said nothing. Cecilia exclaimed: My son, I shall then never see you more!—Whenever you please, Mademoiselle; come

and see him at my house; I reside at present in Paris.—Jeannette, if I could presume that jealousy had changed your heart, I should take your proposal for an irony. Can you persuade me, that you look with a favourable eye on the....mistress of your husband?—Say, my friend, Mademoiselle, always my friend, and you will appreciate the frankness of my discourse.—Madame if you always love me, you are an angel! —I am no other, Mademoiselle, than a woman devoted to your smallest wishes.—My wishes, Jeannette! Alas, I have but one to make!—In regard to that, Mademoiselle, it is not in my power to satisfy you: I am sorry to repeat to you; but my husband!...., I will yield him up only with my life! and that will appear to you the more astonishing, when I know that he loves me not, and that it is you whom

he adores.—He adores me!!!—Always Mademoiselle; oh, more than ever!—Woman, what dare you to say to me, my dear friend! why do you not rather persuade me that he hates me? you would diminish my regret.—I can only tell you the truth, Mademoiselle; but I perceive that I am troublesome to you, I will retire.....

Cecilia would have recalled Jeanette; she went out; and going into another room, she held a private conversation with M. Verneuil, of which we shall soon know the result. Jeanette again gets into her carriage, and returns to her hotel.

The next day, she ordered Bernard to conduct, unknown to his master, the little Charles to M. Verneuil's house. Bernard arrives with the child; delivers a letter to the master of the house; then asking for Mademoiselle

D'Eranville: Mademoiselle said he to her, I have brought your son.—My son! and by what order?—by the order of Madame.—Your mistress ordered you....—Yes, Mademoiselle, to bring the little Charles to you for a moment. Oh, you may see him whenever you please; Madame is so kind!—O mamma! cried the little Charles, running towards Cecilia.—Mamma! you call me your mamma, my little friend! who told you to give me that tender name?—It was my kind friend, Jeanette, who took me aside a little while ago, and said to me: Listen, little Charles, you do not know your mother; well now, they are going to carry you to her, and be sure to kiss and caress her well!

And, in saying these words, the child pressed with his innocent hands the cheeks of Cecilia, which would

glowing with maternal love. Yes, my dear, said she; yes, I am your mother, your kind, your unfortunate mother! Alas, why can I not....restore your father to you!—Oh! I knew him too, my papa! my good friend told me it was her husband.—How! did she tell you that?—Yes, every thing! nay, I am five years old; she does not look upon me any longer as an infant.

Cecilia was astonished, looked at Bernard: How kind your mistress is, said she; she cannot restore me to happiness; but she does every thing that can assuage my pain! she procures me that pleasure of seeing my son, of clasping him in my arms!..... O Jeannette! who would ever have thought that you would one day become my preferred rival?

Cecilia passed some sweet moments with her child: then the servant took

him back again, promising his mother to procure her often that satisfaction.

The next day, Jeannette ordered Bernard to conduct Monsieur, without his suspecting it, to M. Verneuil's house; and this is the method that he took. Briceval wanted very much to speak to his notary about a very pressing affair. Bernard told him that the notary had gone out, but that he had seen him enter the house of one of his clients which was near his own. As it is possible, Sir, added Bernard, that the notary may stay there the whole day, and as you have only two words to say to him, I will conduct you, if you will permit me, to the house where he is.

Briceval consented, ascended his one horse chaise, and Bernard caused it to stop at the door of M. Verneuil. They go in together; Briceval enters, and

the first person whom he perceives is... Cecilia! Cecilia was moved, and wanted to go into another room. Briceval not less astonished than herself, stops her: Pardon, Mademoiselle, I was ignorant that you lived here: I came hither in search of M. B....my notary, who they told me was here.—I much doubted, Sir, that it was not my presence that you sought!—Alas, Cecilia!—what use would it be of to see each other, to nourish our useless love now, and which would only double our sorrow?—I have not the ridiculous ambition to see you fighting incessantly for an unfortunate woman who owes all her misfortunes to you, without hope of ever obtaining any reparation for them.—Cecilia?....—You are married, you have an inestimable wife, worthy of your love; you owe her your whole heart.—Without doubt

Cecilia, I owe my whole being to my wife. That I married her without inclination is very true, and in the fatal certitude that you were no more. Oaths, a history of the family, which they doubtless related to you; all inclined me to the only marriage I could possibly contract: my wife affable, modest, and virtuous, has not merited a scandalous éclat, a divorce!—Alas, Sir, what a word have you pronounced? repel for ever that worst of ideas! To see my friend unhappy through my felicity, would heap up the measure of my woes! Jeannette loves you, Sir; I judge, after my own heart, to what a degree she would suffer!—She is my wife, Cecilia.—May she be always so!—Always.

And he sighed, and Cecilia looked at him, and was affected with the like emotion. Alas, Cecilia! continued

Briceval, how capricious is our destiny!—It is dreadful to me alone!—Then do you not believe, Cecilia, that I love you still: that I regret your hand?—Sir...you ought to forget me!—Forget you! never.—I will repeat your own words to you. Of what use will it be to cherish your love?—It is impossible to drive it from my heart. Always, Cecilia, since our fatal separation, I have thought of you. Even in the arms of my wife, I lavished my esteem for her; but your remembrance solely occupied my mind; my heart was wholly yours!—Why did you not, cruel man, at least leave me my son, he would have in some degree, indemnified me for the loss of you!—Cecilia, Charles has need of a father's instruction; he will one day be a man, and I shall neglect nothing....—Poor child! what will be his destiny!—Happy.—What

woes have his absence caused us !....we are truly the victims of fatality.—
 Adieu, Cecilia.—Adieu, Saint Ange....
 Go, rejoin your wife.—Yes....as you say
I am going again to find a wife—
 Whom you ought to love.—Whom in
 fact I love....very much.

Another sigh....and they separated.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Worfe and Worfe.

IN the mean time, Jeannette expressed to her astonished husband a coolness to which he had not been accustomed. Jeannette, that woman formerly so prudent, so reserved, speaks no more, acts no longer but as a heedless woman of fashion, fickle, and giddy-brained. She has doubled her retinue and domestic servants; she dreams only of fêtes, balls, and banquets, and seems to have undertaken to thwart her husband, to insult his gloomy melancholy and his just remorse. She has assembled at her table

all the young fools and blockheads that could be found in Paris; there is a perpetual buzzing of diffuse words that signify nothing. Madame Briceval seemed to be desirous to dress in the fashion of those women of lost reputation, whose names are so loudly cited at public places and in Ruelles. She is never at home, to attend to her husband, or the concerns of her house: she goes to breakfast with Madame This and goes to drink tea with Madame That. She scolds, she torments every body, her husband especially.... Briceval, surprised to the last degree at this change, took the resolution to go one morning into his wife's apartment. Jeannette, said he gently, is it still you that I speak to, to that Jeannette formerly so gentle, so prudent, so reasonable? How now! since you have resided a few months at Paris, you are

very much spoiled ! you are dressed in the fashion, and you expose me to the ridicule of those foolish husbands whose wives are only cited, because they are so to every body, except to him who has claims upon their heart !... Pardon the comparison ; it is doubtless too strong : I believe you always virtuous ; but the public opinion is against you.—Hey ! what does opinion concern me, Sir, if I am always worthy of my own esteem ?—Such is the language of vanity !.....but appearances accuse you. What are that swarm of blockheads and frivolous women that you assemble every day here ? and you call them your friends ! They are not mine, Madame ; and there was a time when our friends were common to both of us. Jeannette explain to me that singular conduct, which doubtless has a secret motive ; for your character can-

not have changed in such a glaring manner!—My character, Sir, is always the same. Whilst I believed myself beloved by you, whilst I had the weakness to think that I alone occupied your heart, I believed it my duty to sacrifice my taste to yours, and to regulate my conduct by the misanthropy of your character; I said within myself, My husband is an enemy to pleasures, I will make him this sacrifice, since I am the only object of his tender affection: my manners ought to be as pure as his own: these, Sir, are the reasons that caused me to act in a manner conformable to your desires. Recollect too our first residence at Paris? I delivered myself up to all the feasts and all the pleasures, for that it formed a part of my character to love society and dissipation. That life seemed to displease you, I put an end to it: from complai-

sance to you, I returned to our melancholy province. You there left me for a whole year a prey to the most profound ennui. You returned, and I discovered that you never had more than a regard for me: that your heart had been, and still is, another's! I now say to myself, since I am deceived, since I am abused, I have nothing more to care for; I love pleasure, pleasure shall be my only law: I fear not the indifference of my husband; I have acquired that already! I will answer it by the same coolness, and I will no longer bury my youth in solitude, because solitude pleases him. This, sir, is a candid explanation, as you perceive, of my present conduct.

Briceval, confounded, looked at Jeannette, and said to her: you keep very bad company, Jeannette, and which will certainly corrupt your mind,

and that gives you ill counsels. Why do you suppose that I love you not? Alas! do I not give a sufficiently great proof of friendship by remaining in those bonds which you know are not those my heart would have chosen?—You are very gallant, sir!—Your candour excites mine. Yes, I love you not, Jeannette.....but I do more, I esteem you, I esteem you at least! I believed your heart exempt from jealousy; I suspected it of greater attachment to a friend whose parents had brought you up. Instead of shewing yourself a generous rival, a feeling friend, you speak no longer of that friend but with irony: you shun her, you shun her friends, that M. Verneuil whose good sense and probity I have heard you boast of; and to add to the incongruity, you pursue every whim, and all this, say you, because you are sure that you do not pos-

self my heart ! Jeannette this is not the means to reclaim it towards you ! I hope that this discourse will suffice to restore you to your former senses.

Briceval was going out, Jeannette stopped him : sir ?—What is it ?—I want money.—Again, Madame ? I never knew you spend so much before !—for the rest, Madame, there is a rouleau, which is the sixth, notice that, since your residence in Paris. I warn you that you will ruin me, if you apply to me so often. Enjoy it, Madame, but you will permit me one day to tell you more clearly, if you continue, my mode of thinking.

Briceval retired furious ; Jeannette paid no manner of attention to the wise counsels which he had just given her. She decked herself with the greatest care : then, accompanied by Bernard, who never quitted her, she went into those

circles, where for the first time, she passed the whole night. We may judge the grief of her husband, seeing her return in the morning, pale and wan ! He would have scolded ; she flew in a passion ; the poor husband shut himself up in his chamber, where he caused Bernard to come to him. Bernard, my good friend, said he, I promise you secrecy ; but tell me where your mistress passed the night ?—Sir ?... speak. Whatever the secret may be that you are going to confide to me, I shall have sufficient strength to listen to it, and discretion enough not to bring your name in question with Madame.—Sir, do you promise me so ?—Yes, yes,—But if, Madame should come to know it !.....She shall be ignorant of it, speak ?—Oh, Sir, Madame has been playing.—Playing ?—Yes, Sir, and lost, not only the hundred louis which you

were pleased to give her but two hundred more upon her parole.—Three hundred louis, good heaven! And in what infernal house?.....Ah, this is not the first time that Madame has played and lost!.....I am sure that she has already left behind her at Madame E-tange's house, that pretended Baroness, that intriguer, known to all Paris by her passion for gaming, more than twenty thousand francs!—What say you? Where could she get them from;—I know not, Sir.—Very well, here's a very pretty way of life!

Scarcely was Bernard gone out of the apartment of Briceval, than the latter saw M. B his notary enter. "Pardon me, Sir, if I disturb you;" but I want an explanation with you. Do you authorize Madame Briceval to come to me so often for money on account of the funds which I have belonging to you?—

How, Sir, my wife goes—only a few minutes ago I gave her two thousand crowns ; but I have got her receipt.—Is it possible ? and so M. B.....you had the imprudence.—Sir, I have got her receipt I tell you, and Madame is without doubt sufficiently estimable for me to give her the money with confidence.—Ah, how much has she already touched at your house?—Why, out of the forty thousand francs which you left with me to reimburse what remained for your pay for the house in Du Barg Street, I have given Madame about one half.—Good heavens!—It was she told me, for purchase which she had made with your consent.—Alas ! M. B.....at your age, with so much experience, that you should have given such large sums to a woman without the signature of her husband ! and you to believe her falsehoods !.....but she will ruin me

if she has to do with people as confident as you!....I forbid you to give her a do it without my permission.—Sir, if I had believed.....Leave me, Sir, I am in despair!....

The notary retired, and Briceval, furious, went to his wife's apartment. She is gone out; a grand breakfast calls her to the house of a woman, whose very name is a scandal!—What a day did Briceval pass! He wished to see M. Verneuil, to implore the credit which he had upon the mind of Jeannette! Briceval goes to the house of that worthy man, and confides to him all his chagrins. M. Verneuil did not appear astonished at it. He knows all that; he sighs at it, and thinks with Briceval, that the mind of his wife is debauched, and her heart spoiled by evil counsels. Bernard has then told you all, added Verneuil? You must have been very

much surpris'd to learn that your wife, quitting you in the evening and feigning to go to her own chamber, should afterwards go out of her apartment, and go and pass all the night in gaming houses, where she has already staked a great part of her fortune.—What, what! that night was not the first?—Was you ignorant of it? Indiscreet that I am!.....Since I have had the imprudence to inform you of it, you must know that about two months ago, she borrowed of me two thousand crowns, which I had destined for a repayment, and which I did myself the pleasure to lend her, believing that she would make a good use of it.—Here is another matter! but if she borrows in like manner of every body, my dear Sir, I shall be ruined, ruined without resource!—Cheer up; Sir; these thirty thousand francs trouble me happily

very little, and I can easily wait your convenience to.....That kindness penetrates me with gratitude! Ah, Sir; can this be the same Jeannette who lived for eighteen months so prudent, so reserved with me? Her mother is ignorant of this odious conduct! her poor mother knows it not!—She knows all, Sir: Madame Dericourt pities you, and swears never more to see her daughter, whom fortune and her residence at Paris have rendered unworthy of her these are her expressions;.....Oh, how unhappy I am !.....

A woman enters, it is Cecilia: she would have retired with affright. Stay Mademoiselle, said Briceval; oh! stay, console me at least by the prospect of your virtues, for the shameful vices of which a guilty wife gives me a fatal example.—Sir, they calumniate Madame Briceval; I cannot believe.....To the

evidence, bluntly interrupted M. Verneuil? Have you lost all confidence in me, Cecilia, and do you believe me capable of repeating calumnies, if I had not a certainty of the cruel truth?

Cecilia was silent. Briceval looks at her O Mademoiselle, how much am I to be pitied for having formed such a connection? You would have scattered blessings in my house; but now hell is in my house.

Briceval shed some tears: Cecilia, affected, hastened to dry them up; she joined M. Verneuil and Madame Dolmont to offer those consolations to the unfortunate husband, which he could no longer hear; in short, after a most tender conversation which recalled his first flame, and gave a new activity to his love, Briceval departed, and entered again into his own house to meet with solitude and grief.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A violent Scene.—Conclusion.

Two days slid away and no Madame had made her re-appearance in the Hotel; she at last returned; and her husband, highly incensed, would not go into her apartment, for fear he should fly in a passion. He caused Bernard to come up. Whence come you? said he; where has your mistress been passing these two days?—Alas, my dear master, do not ask me that question!—I will know it, or I will turn you away.—Sir!—Speak, vile flatterer of the disorderly conduct of a guilty wife!—I am lost, Sir, if Madame knows.—Choose

ten louis, or an hundred bastinados and your discharge?—Well, Sir, if you insist upon it, I will choose the ten louis, and I will tell you that we have been in the country at that Madame Etange's.—There was a very large company!..... Madame played there and lost all, even her jewels.—What horror! but formerly she had not that taste for play?—Oh pardon me there, Sir, I have made the observation, though I am but an ignorant fellow, especially during the year you was absent, at Chartres, Madame had her parties whither she went to play, in the evening unknown to her mother.—'Twas that was the ruin of her! and she has pledged her diamonds?—And besides.....Hey?—Ah! Sir you are going into a passion!—Tell all, Rascal?—and after that a sum of money that a young gentleman very gallantly lent her. Oh that---A young

gentleman?---That Madame thought very amiable, and who took great care of her.---Begone, scoundrel!....

Bernard, affrighted, made his escape. Briceval is desperate : he feels, for the first time, the transports of jealousy.... He walks about with long strides; strikes the furniture; he is in a dreadful state. At last, he determines to go to his wife's apartment. Madame...I know all!---All, Sir! hey! and what then?---Who is that young man who follows you every where at Madame Etange's, that vile creature at whose house you passed two days?---That.... young man, Sir?---What you are troubled?---Who could have told you?---I know all your deportments, I tell you;---What do you call, Sir, my deportments? Am I not mistress of my actions?---Unworthy woman; you compel me at last to regret Cecilia.---

It becomes you very much to make use of that name before me, you ought to blush at it!—I ought to blush! Oh, very well, Madame; your conduct has conquered my hatred for divorce. This is too much to bear; an end must be put to it, and I entreat you to consent to it....Never, Sir. Divorce is a scandalous act, and always dishonours a woman.—It can add nothing to your reputation.—I see how it is, Sir; you burn to fly into the arms of Cecilia! it is dreadful, and I am very unhappy to have married a man who loved another.—What you think I shall marry again, Madame? Well, let us do better; let us quietly separate from each other, without eclat, with invoking the authority of the laws.—No, Sir, no; I will be free, myself, to give my hand to whom I please.—To that young man at Etange's?—Bernard has betrayed

me !....but I will be revenged on him.—Before all, Madame, you must tell me if you will change your conduct, or accept a divorce?—No, Sir; I will neither renounce my company, nor be divorced.—Ah! that is too hard; as for instance! Very well, Madame, we shall see! we shall see!.....

Briceval went out in a passion; he takes some turns in the street, like a fool, like a madman! He wavers, he hesitates; at last, he goes to his notary, whom he consults. The notary confirms him in his project of the divorce, he does not quit him till he has taken him before the justice of the peace, where Briceval, more dead than alive, signs the deed which the notary had drawn up. Both of them return to the hotel with the justice of the peace, Jeannette is not yet gone out. The notary addresses some cutting re-

proaches to her to engage her to sign. She flies in a passion, she cries, she gives new proofs of her rough and violent character, and she at last signs the deed of divorce by mutual consent. This is not all, said the notary, drawing another deed from his Portfolio, Monsieur must sign this other paper to consolidate this separation.—Alas! Sir, exclaimed Briceval, when will you have done?

He takes the pen, signs without reading, and shuts himself up in his chamber to deliver himself to the excess of his grief: Jeannette, at the summit of her wishes, gets into a carriage with the notary and justice of peace, and all three go to M. Verneuil's, who is prepared to meet them.

Towards three o'clock in the afternoon, a coach stops at the door of Briceval's hotel; a lady descends: it is Ma-

dame Dolmont, who ascends to the afflicted husband, whom she found bathed in tears. Sir, said she, my brother and myself have learnt this morning the act of courage which separates an unworthy woman from you. I come to calm your sorrow, to offer you consolation, and to entreat you to come and pass the day with us.--Madame... I feel....but I wish to be alone to-day, always!...You must not refuse me this favour, Sir: your friends cannot abandon you in the dreadful state you are in: they must console you, and carry you away in spite of yourself.--I cannot, Madame, after having been so cruelly deceived!--Do not regret a fickle woman, and come with us; Cecilia is also very much afflicted!--Cecilia!....You said Cecilia?--She weeps over your misfortunes, and at the misconduct of her that was her friend.

Cecilia wishes to see you !--- She weeps on my account, that kind Cecilia ; Alas ! I am at present free ; but can marriage yet smile in my thoughts ?

Briceval continued to refuse to go to M. Verneuil's ; but Madame Dolmont entreated him so much, that at last he yielded to her importunity. The desire of seeing Cecilia again was without doubt the motive of his complaisance, and that desire was very natural ; Briceval gets into the coach, and behold them at Madame Dolmont's, where he then found only Cecilia. (Cecilia herself was ignorant that Jeannette, a notary and a justice of the peace were in the house ; all three concealed in M. Verneuil's closet.)

Briceval enters ; he looks full at Cecilia, falls into an arm chair, and places his two hands upon his eyes, from which escape torrents of tears. Briceval, my

friend, exclaimed Cecilia not less affected, you are much to be pitied, and Jeannette has cruelly deceived us!—

How different is her heart from your's,

O Cecilia!—Who would have thought

it! but is she really culpable? Have

they not deceived you? no, I can never

believe that, that inestimable woman

could fail in her duties.—She has be-

trayed them all!—Briceval, the world

is so censorious! false reports....you are

too ready to break:—Cecilia!...I could

hold it no longer...vicious connections,

gambling: my ruin would have been

her work. That poor Jeannette! she

was formerly so good, so virtuous! for

a long time she formed your happiness!

—she has formed my despair, my

shame!...—Where is she at present?

she sighs without doubt that she has

lost you.—She has proved to me that

this separation fulfilled her wishes.—

Impossible, my friend, impossible! you are of such value!—

Cecilia blushed, and was silent. Briceval examines her: Cecilia shall you always love me?—Can I forget the father of my child?—What! you will not harbour any resentment for an unhappy marriage....by which I am sufficiently punished!—Chance has occasioned all our misfortunes.—It may still occasion our felicity.—What do I hear! Briceval....you may expect!....—Alas, Cecilia, at this melancholy moment, do I know if I am still worthy....if your heart?....Pardon, pardon! the cruel Jeannette has disturbed all my faculties: she has occasioned....

Your happiness, exclaimed a voice! and suddenly a door opened: Jeannette appeared, accompanied by M. Verneuil, Madame Dolmont, the notary, the justice of the peace and the faithful Bernard.

What! you here, Madame, exclaimed Briceval, rising up as if to go away!—Yes, I am, replied Jeannette, to unite you tender lovers, to render you man and wife.

Cecilia exclaimed in her turn: what do I hear?—It is time pursued Jeannette, that you should all do me justice: it is time finally to make myself known. You have thought me light, fickle, dissipated, a gamester, and perhaps a faithless wife; learn that I was nothing less than all these, and that I have not ceased a single moment to merit your esteem.—Dare you, interrupted Briceval?—Let me speak.

“ You may remember that day, that fatal day on which Cecilia recollected Saint Ange again in my husband? What grief did I not endure from that fatal discovery? I was the rival of my friend! I had deprived her for ever of all

hope of happiness ; the most violent conflicts took place in my heart. On one side the love and esteem that I had for my husband, made me shudder at the sole idea of losing him ; on the other gratitude, and the friendship that I had vowed to Mademoiselle D'Eranville, all imposed on me a law to restore her lover to her. She is a mother, said I within myself, Cecilia ! her claims are stronger than mine. Without the *fifty francs* which she gave me, I could not have taken the journey to Chartres ; I should not have found my family again, and married the lover of my friend. Her misfortune is then her own work ! I must repair all, restore her husband to her, and give a father to his child ! But how to go about it ? M. Briceval abhorred divorce : he often told me so ; it is impossible that he should consent to the sacrifice that I

should propose, of his hand in favour of another. Cecilia also would not be happy at the expence of her friend. Let us be dextrous enough to compel both of them to unite, to restore my husband his liberty, in spite of himself ! This plan was the consequence of a thousand cruel reflections : but at last I determined on it, and I stuck at nothing to put it in execution !

“ That, which was most repugnant to me, was to affect coldness towards my friend whom I loved the most, seeing I was the cause of her misfortune ! I had the courage to do it ; I had also that of raising quarrels with my husband ; to assume the fashion of a coquette, to feign dissipation, and, in a word, an evil conduct ; for strong reasons were necessary to bring him to my aim. His notary, here present, was admitted into my confidence, and served me

beyond my wishes; M. Verneuil also readily entered into my project after he had in vain strove to combat it. He behaved in such a manner as even to leave my dear Cecilia in the common error, for she was ignorant of my design. Finally, this faithful servant, the good Bernard, was charged to give false intelligence to his master, which drove him to the last degree of indignation. Briceval, the nights that I passed far from you, were with Madame Dolmont, at her country seat, which slid away, in the practice, I dare avow it, of some benefactions towards the poor indigent people in her village. I have not borrowed any sums of money from M. Verneuil, nor M. B.....as they have made you believe; and the rouleaus of louis which you have given me I have deposited them all in the hands of your notary: he has them, and he

will restore them to you. My mother instructed by me concerning my conduct, has had the goodness to approve it; in a word, I have the pride to call myself a most virtuous culprit; and, if the disagreeable part I was compelled to act has caused me to suffer, I am very well indemnified for it by your happiness, which it has wrought.

They all remained in mute astonishment. Cecilia broke silence: I knew very well, within myself, that she could not be guilty!—Generous woman, exclaimed Briceval! Alas, I have!....How shameful for me! but I will repair my fault: you shall be my wife, heavenly angel! I will resume thy soft chains.—Impossible, Sir, replied Jeannette, (*smiling,*) we are divorced; ah! the deed is signed; (*in a more serious tone;*) and afterwards you also signed the promise to wed Cecilia!—Me?—Here it is; it

is the paper that M. B.... presented to you the second time.

Briceval was silent, Cecilia threw herself into the arms of her friend : she would not profit by so much generosity ; and then there arose, between Cecilia, Briceval, and Jeannette, a debate in which the utmost delicacy and the most affecting friendship shone together.

Jeannette took the resolution to carry the little Charles in her arms between Briceval and Cecilia ; well, said she, if you will not hear the prayers of your friend, listen then, cruel parents, to the plaintive voice of this child, who cries to you : Restore my honour by given me a father, a mother that I may own in that society into which you have launched my sad existence !

The child, as if by instinct, repeated *my sad existence !* in so moving a tone .

that Briceval exclaimed: Well then, since friendship, nature, all conspires to our happiness, O Cecilia! let us then be happy.

Jeannette took the hand of her friend and put it in that of Briceval, and united them together: saying, my dear friend...I possess the reward of all my cares!....And behold, my dear Cecilia, the interest of your *fifty francs*!...

The notary immediately drew up the new contract; and Cecilia shedding the tears of sensibility on the bosom of Jeannette: my dear friend, said she, generous and truly sublime woman, can you suffer that there should still exist here a miserable being? M. Vernueil!....he has long loved you!....he sighs in secret; but I have been able to discover his passion; and indeed (*smiling*) I am not astonished that he so well seconded your project of di-

vocce : nevertheless, I am only jesting : his heart is too well known to me, for me to suppose that he had any other intention in assisting your own, than that of contributing to your happiness. Jeannette will you make him happy ?

M. Vernueil threw himself at the knees of Jeannette, and said to her : Madame, If I have always hidden the timid and respectful love with which you had inspired me, and which has caused me secretly to shed many tears since I found you were married, it was not with the hope of obtaining your hand that I have justified your confidence in this affair. I saw three beings miserable by an union at which happiness could not longer preside : I admired your greatness of soul, and the novelty of your sacrifice engaged me to aid you with all the means in my

power; but, Madame, I dare not yet aspire to the happiness of succeeding M. Briceval: so much felicity is beyond my hopes, and I only require the happiness to remain your friend!

Jeannette smiled, looked at the notary, and said to him: perhaps it would fatigue you too much to write a second contract?....The notary answered by the negative, and M. Vernueil, as well as his respectable sister, was overwhelmed with joy.

Let us all now go, continued Jeannette, to live in retirement, near to a beloved mother, and that I may refresh myself a little far from those blustering and contemptible societies, which the part I had to act compelled me too long to see! Cecilia, Briceval, M. Vernueil, his sister, Madame Dericourt, and myself, shall from henceforth form but one family. Let us not forget to

settle the good Emily near us, who has also shewn so much friendship for us, and to handsomely recompence the faithful Bernard, who only apparently betrayed his master and mistress the better to serve them. Let us all bestow our attentions to the education of young Charles, to whom the name of Briceval is now going to belong; and it is thus that in the midst of good friends, and zealous servants, we are sure henceforth to enjoy a constant happiness.

The justice of the peace, affected also by the nobleness of Jeannette's procedure, prescribed to them altogether what was necessary for them to do, conformable to the laws concerning divorce, and to conclude the intended marriages; then all the friends set off for Chartres, where they were received with the most lively tenderness by the inestimable Madame Dericourt,

who approved all that had been done, and did not cease her eulogies on the conduct of her daughter, the good and generous Jeannette.

At the end of the time prescribed by the laws, Briceval wedded Cecilia, and Jeannette became the wife of M. Vernueil. Cecilia a year after, became the mother of a very pretty little girl, which she suckled herself: these four friends live at the present day in the greatest intimacy, and are happy by the supernatural sacrifice of one among them, of Jeannette, that affecting model of friendship and of gratitude!

FINIS.

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